

PERSONAL EXPERIENCES
of
A CUB REPORTER

CORNELIUS VANDERBILT JR.

PERSONAL EXPERIENCES OF A CUB REPORTER

BY

CORNELIUS VANDERBILT, JR.

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TO HER
WHO INSPIRES AND AIDS ME
IN MY CHOSEN WORK
MY WIFE

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INTRODUCTION

IN the following pages I have set down a few of the more interesting experiences which have been allotted to me during the last three years of my career in the news-gathering world.

Coleridge tells us that human experience, like the stern lights of a ship at sea, too often illuminates only the path we have passed over. These sketches might well be termed, then, the enterprises from which I have emerged successfully; the others, and they make up the minutes of a reporter's daily life, are usually colorless, so I have omitted describing them.

For assistance in the preparation of this book I am indebted to many people, among them the late J. K. Ohl, managing editor of the former *New York Herald*; John M. Siddall, editor of the *American Magazine*; John N. Wheeler, president of the Bell Syndicate; and E. B. McLaughlin, of the *Seattle Times*; and my thanks are due to them for their per-

mission to use such portions of this volume as originally appeared in periodicals and a series of newspaper articles.

THE AUTHOR

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PERSONAL EXPERIENCES OF A CUB REPORTER

CHAPTER I

MOLDING A REPORTER

SERVICE in some form or other should be the keynote of every worthwhile thing in life, and newspaper work gives one a greater scope for serving the public at large, and molding opinion, than any other present-day occupation.

To become a great editor, with a clear and impartial vision of national and local issues is a reporter's highest ambition. Some of us strive even higher, to become publicists and interpreters of great questions affecting our people.

Eventually, I hope by hard study and diligent effort to become a publicist if that is within my realm of opportunity. Again, I have an ambition to control a newspaper syndicate, through

which I could contribute to the best papers in the country, irrespective of size or circulation.

At best, the carving of one's career is a difficult task. I found it a harder task than I anticipated. But the glorious privilege of being independent, of earning one's way in the world by a process of brain and bodily energy, is the chief attribute of journalism. At first I found it hard to convince the editors that my writing was not a fad; that I was perfectly serious and sincere about it and was really embarking on a life of work. Those editorial moguls of the oak-desk shot sidelong glances at me as if to question my veracity and my ability to write the brand of news they demanded.

I secured my first position on the former *New York Herald*, and was obliged to write my name on a waiting list, the staff being filled. I was instructed to drop in every few days until a vacancy occurred. Within ten days E. W. H., whom I had known for some time, left the city staff to accept a position with an advertising agency. He informed Mr. J. K. Ohl, the *Herald's* managing editor, that he had a friend who would take his place, who was a "cub" but willing to learn journalism from the very bottom.

At 10 o'clock on the morning of the next day I was engaged and took my seat behind an antiquated typewriter in the City Room of the old Herald Building to await instructions. They were not long in coming. In those days the dynamic autocrat of the *Herald* was its City Editor, "Billy" Willis. The "cubs" worshipped and feared him at the same time. His particular domain was a box-like chamber adjoining the City Room. He swayed imperial power over this region and did it with efficiency. I well remember his first words of encouragement:

"When you can cover eighteen assignments in one day you can consider yourself a full-fledged reporter. Until then you will be our 'star-cub.'"

I bowed my obsequious acknowledgments, and my knees quaked visibly. I reflected that eighteen assignments were not any too many as I gazed about me and noted a battalion of successful reporters who had not stopped at that number. I aspired to be successful, too. Besides I had covered thrice eighteen assignments in a day's run while serving as a private overseas.

I am a wiser "cub" since that memorable

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interview. I have learned that my City Editor exaggerated a bit. Six assignments constitute a good day's labor on a metropolitan newspaper.

The City Room is the main artery of the modern newspaper. Everything that passes through this ever-grinding news-mill is examined to the core before it passes on and into print. The average daily paper thrives best on the live local news gathered by its reporters; telegraphic news and other items come next. Every iota of news that will attract the reader is pieced together here and worked into shape for the eagle eyes of the copy-readers. For be it known, that the copy-reader is important enough to bask in the shadow of the City Editor. To the "cub" reporter he is the biggest Roman of them all, for he is the fellow who "trims" your copy; he is the man with a squad of blue pencils and the cruelest of scissors.

The copy-readers in most newspaper offices are seated round a table shaped somewhat like a horseshoe. Soft lights shine just over their heads, day and night. Pots of library paste are everywhere. The *Herald* copy-readers were

a lugubrious array of ancient scribes, whose pet phrase seemed to be "better next time."

Little cables connected their table with the composing room upstairs. Throughout the night and wee hours the "copy" was placed in the boxes attached to the cable and sent to the gigantic presses that "crushed" out the news with a thundering noise that shook the building.

All over the City Room were the busy little news-tickers, similar to those that tick out stock reports. Local happenings not covered by the staff men came in over these tickers. The Associated Press and United Press, the City News and Standard News added their songs to those of the fifty or more typewriters that drummed away ceaselessly throughout the night. This humdrum at first confuses the "cub"; afterward he learns to love it. A newspaper office is the best place in the world to learn concentration. Working always against time he *must* concentrate, in spite of every noise under the sun going on at the same time.

My career as a news-gatherer has been a series of exciting sensations, and I should not advise one to enter the newspaper world unless he or she is ready for an overflow measure of mental and physical exercise. In the past two

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and a half years I have never worked harder in my life; and I have never enjoyed anything half as well as "running down" a fresh news scent for a great city daily.

My first story—everything in the daily routine is referred to as a "story"—was an interview with an African potentate on his first visit to New York City. The Assistant City Editor, who had the patience of Job, assigned me to the McAlpin Hotel to interview General Harab-Ushin. I needed no urging, for I was doubly keen to discover whether the science of reporting was easy or difficult.

Within a few minutes I had reached the suite occupied by the gentleman of African estate and complexion. For the first time I discovered that competition guides news-getting as it does any other business. Fully eight reporters from other papers were lined in the corridor, on either side of the mystical doorway leading to the general's apartment. Standing near us was a chocolate-eyed servant wearing a weird red and gold costume and a jungle appearance, who sleepily gazed at us through the corners of his eyes.

We waited an hour thus. Then the door opened and a valet inquired whether the head

waiter or the stenographer had sent us. Before we could reply he desired to learn whether we spoke French or Spanish. I understood French and a scribe from over Brooklyn way had taken a correspondence course in Spanish; so we entered the apartment of the distinguished African—all foreigners interviewed by the modern American newspaper are dubbed “distinguished.”

The general, a small man of broad proportions, was seated on a sofa, togged out in a uniform as resplendent as a vaudeville comedian's. He bowed graciously and with a French-Spanish patois desired us to take down a statement he had prepared for the press. He evidently had mistaken our calling, assuming we were a coterie of hotel stenographers. We did not correct his mistake. The statement finished he thanked us volubly, ordered his valet to recompense us for the work, and arose as a signal for us to go.

The reporter from the Brooklyn paper gave me the first inkling of the highly complicated machinery of news-gathering when he politely informed the general that it was customary for all visiting dignitaries to place their honorable photographs with the hotel stenographers for

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future reference. But the the general had no photograph that did him justice. A few minutes later I happily summoned a *Herald* cameraman and, escorting the African to the hotel roof, we "shot" a number of photos of him.

When he saw himself pictured on the front page of the following morning's paper the ceremonious African must have thought to himself that reporters grew like mushrooms in this enterprising Republic.

This "story" was my initiation into the mysteries of news-gathering. It demonstrated to me that the foremost asset of a good reporter is plenty of resourcefulness, and an ever-ready nerve to meet any situation, however difficult. Later I learned that this active work increased my mental functions, for, if anything, it is bound to make one alert, with a skipper's eye for details and analysis. It certainly broadens the vision and opens up new fields every day in which to test one's wits.

At first the hours appeared tediously long. Even though every minute contributed its meed of news, there were times when one had to wait hours for a "top-head" story to come along. During these times I polished up on my news-

paper "adjectives" by frequent visits to the well-filled library, and to the "morgue" where the "has been" material is stocked and recorded for future use. I watched my more experienced colleagues at work—to-day many of them have important positions at the head of their professions. In journalism I have met some of the most interesting people I have ever known.

Many young women were learning the profession of news-writing in the old *Herald* office, for the late James Gordon Bennett, and after him his *Herald* Committee, believed in giving both sexes a fair chance to enter the journalistic field. Often, outside of New York City, I have been told that women never could become successful newspaper writers as they were too soft-hearted and too much inclined to "sob-stuff." My opinion is that, on certain subjects, women surpass men as reporters. It is safer to assign a woman to a crime confession, for people are inclined to talk more freely and frankly in the presence of women. In some cases it is better to have a woman interview politicians; for these gentry usually underestimate the mental capacity of the gentler sex, as a result of which they are wel-

comed by a jolt when they read the interview in the paper next morning.

For several weeks a young woman worked close by me on the *Herald*. I observed that she had a lively interest in her work. She was a cripple in body but certainly not in mental efficiency. She successfully executed some very difficult criminological work for the paper. To-day she stands high in her new profession—that of one of the foremost criminologists of Richmond, Virginia.

I have stated that the hours were long, and I want to impress this upon all who desire to enter journalism. Since June, 1919, I have seldom worked less than twelve hours a day; the usual time in the office has been from two P.M. to two A.M., though the hours vary more or less.

He is a lucky "cub" that succeeds in securing a day off once a week. I have worked every Christmas, New Year's, Thanksgiving, July Fourth and all other holidays, including nearly every Sunday in the year. The City Desk is no respecter of time or person.

We had a set of rules on the old *Herald* to govern a reporter's copy. Most of these rules had been prepared by Mr. Bennett, who had

certain fixed ideas about news and the style in which it was to be written. These rules have since been done away with. One remained, that all-meaning word "terseness." We "cubs" were instructed, even admonished, from time to time, to state a fact and to state it quickly. Newspapers cost money to produce, and space is extremely valuable. A "padded" story is not read merely for the sake of reading; it is better to economize on words and punctuation. It gives the story more strength. Apart from this the reporter is left to his own devices, initiative and peculiar personal style. There is one unwritten law in a newspaper office: he that succeeds in getting a good story must also write and embellish it.

Interviews are interesting, and probably more engrossing than anything except a "crime" story. I detest crime and all its synonyms, nevertheless there is something about running down and writing a "crime" story that appeals to all reporters. Possibly it's the excitement. I was once tendered some valuable advice with respect to interviewing. I was instructed never to express a personal opinion during an interview, which could be construed as belonging to the interview; that the successful interviewer

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religiously abided by this rule, and if he had any ideas on the subject at all they could be injected into the text while writing the story. I was advised never to theorize one way or the other unless I was fully informed as to *both* sides of the question, for the commonest fault committed by inexperienced reporters is rushing into a story without knowing its *two sides*.

As I went along I discovered that journalism awakened a latent interest in world questions, which has grown in intensity with the years. I attacked the deep-rooted question of politics and began to have a glowing admiration for people who did those constructive things that were of daily record in our newspaper. Furthermore, I learned that to become a recognized all-round scribe meant that I must forego the ambition to specialize. I readjusted the groundwork of my earlier "cub" days and prepared to write on all subjects in the clearest, matter-of-fact style.

The molding of public opinion is done not only by the erudite editor but by the less dignified but fresh-from-the-beat-reporter, as well. Usually the young "cub" entering upon his career is afforded every opportunity to develop

himself into the finished product. For who knows but that this self-same "cub" may not have in him the germ of future greatness; who knows but that he may not develop into a great editor, or publicist, or leader of the people?

CHAPTER II

CHECKMATE

Two of the mightiest dreadnoughts of the United States Navy stole into the harbor of Seattle, Washington, on a warm summer's evening in 1920. The wireless had announced their approach as they steamed down the coast, but it was thought their destination was San Francisco and that they would proceed thence without entering Puget Sound.

But those prophecies went wrong. They veered from their course and, entering the Sound, dropped anchor off Seattle. Much speculation was rife in the various newspaper offices as to the reason for the unexpected visit. In the office of the *Seattle Times* reporters were on keen-edge, each hoping to obtain the coveted assignment to go aboard the big ships and to solve the question of their visit.

"Boys," suddenly broke in the City Editor, "Josephus Daniels, Secretary of the Navy, and John Barton Payne, Secretary of the Interior

are on board. 'Mac,' you are assigned to cover the story. Perhaps Vanderbilt would like to accompany you."

Indeed, I was but awaiting the opportunity. Secretary Daniels and Mr. Payne had sailed for Alaska a few weeks previously and their departure was veiled in as much mystery as their sudden return.

All that evening we paced the Navy Dock in a vain effort to learn something of the distinguished visitors. The guard had instructions to permit no visitors on board. Our questions went unanswered. We returned home that night dejected and news-less.

Shortly after sunrise next morning we were on the dock, nimbly scouting for fresh signs of news. Offshore the Battleship *New York* lay peacefully heaving on her anchor. Just astern of her was another great ship. Eight fast destroyers completed the majesty of the marine picture before us.

Some of the reporters were on their way across the bay in a chartered launch, but "Mac" and I waited on the dock for a navy launch to come alongside. We predicted rightly, for at seven bells a large crew-boat hove in. Only one guard was stationed on the dock, and he

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attached enough importance to our press badges to permit us to board the boat. Before long we were at the gangway of the *New York*.

Then our fortune changed. A frigid-looking officer asked our business. We told him and two minutes later the coxswain was hustling us ashore. Thus ended escapade Number One.

We had to get aboard that ship somehow or our alleged fame as news-getters would perish on the spot. Shortly after nine o'clock a photographer appeared on the float with a heavy consignment of photographic paraphernalia. A group of civilians soon joined him. A launch appeared, the party scampered on board and we did likewise. Again we sallied over to the elusive gangway. There was that inscrutable officer still holding the fort. We smirked at him to disguise our faces, but it didn't work.

"Get out of here, you fellows. The next time I see you out here you'll be in for a ducking. Now get!"

We did. The Sound waters are beautiful but cold. However, our zeal was still undampened. News we had to get, come what may. We decided to risk another chance. Close by we discovered a battleship launch

loading bottles of water. We trotted down there to assist in the loading like a couple of rustics from the interior who had seen salt water for the first time. The junior officer in charge looked askance at us several minutes and then asked us why we manifested such an exalted ambition for work.

"We've never been aboard one of them there battleships, and we want to see what they look like from the inside," declared the resourceful "Mac."

The unsuspecting officer fell. After ordering us to stow a huge basketful of bread on board, he added that he would try to arrange for an unofficial visit, if but for a few moments. The launch set out and we resigned ourselves to fate, with a reportorial prayer on our lips. Being a duty boat the craft drew up on the port side of the dreadnought, on the opposite side from the insurmountable gangway and its gold-braided sentinel.

A choppy sea was running and we had some difficulty in gaining a foothold on the slippery gangway. The bread basket was heavy and the gangway narrow, and after some delay we managed to reach the deck. As we were about to descend for the second basket our nemesis,

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the starboard gangway officer, approached us. We had visions of an icy bath. I can say that our shadows almost "froze to the deck" as he passed without recognizing us. He saw our ignoble backs only, for at that moment both of us were concentrated on the mountainous topography of the country opposite Seattle.

With this danger passed a kindly officer of elderly mien stopped and inquired the nature of our business. He evidently thought we were a pair of young Canadians.

"We have been helping carry provisions aboard," replied "Mac." "We have long cherished a desire to view an American battleship at close quarters, and here we are." A moment later he was initiating us into the intricacies of the great ship, and impressing us by the magnitude of the vessel, indulging in a lot of marine arithmetic until he had us "awed" completely. On this official tour we passed the stern cabin, at the entrance of which stood a marine guard. Innocently we asked who resided there.

"In peace time that's where the Admiral of the fleet resides," he told us. "In war the Admiral in charge of operations is quartered there. It is now the temporary home of

Josephus Daniels, the man who runs the Navy."

Our obliging officer here left us for a moment. Meanwhile from a companionway emerged the much-sought-after Mr. Payne. He glanced curiously at us. This was our supreme moment, and you may be sure we grasped it.

"Mr. Payne," spoke "Mac," "we're reporters, and we've had a fierce time reaching you. May we have an interview since we're here?"

The much surprised colleague of the Secretary of the Navy hesitated for a moment, and then replied:

"Why didn't you send your cards in. There have been no orders prohibiting reporters from seeing me."

We had no time for explanations. We wanted news and wanted it quickly, seeing that no other reporters were about. My companion asked if I could see Mr. Daniels while he quizzed Mr. Payne. An officer was summoned who conducted me below where the marine barred the entrance to the citadel of the Navy secretary. Here I was instructed to wait. A few minutes later Mr. Daniels summoned me into his presence.

We were in the "stern-sheets" of the great

battleship as it were, and for all the world it looked as though we might be in a comfortable suite of the Biltmore Hotel. At one end of the room was the Secretary, comfortably seated in a great damask chair. Beside him was a large mahogany table, on which I noticed a decanter, several glasses and some cracked ice.

The war head of the Navy motioned me to a chair and proffered me a drink. I thanked him and poured out some of the contents of the mysterious-looking decanter, only to find a flowing glass of grape-juice before me. He asked what sort of a "story" I wanted, and I replied that I was keenly anxious to solve the riddle of his trip to Alaska.

"Many people have asked harder ones than that," Mr. Daniels returned, with an affable smile. Then his brow became corrugated as he continued: "Well, I've been up there to find out whether the vegetables were as big as I had been once told. I wanted to find out whether the grass grew as long as it does in North Carolina, and if there was any hay-making in the spring. What else can I say?"

I replied that I had every reason to suspect that his voyage to Alaska was to ascertain something having to do with the Navy. I said

that whatever that something was, it would some day be public property, and I sought the opportunity then and there to give it to the public. I cited our difficulty in reaching the ship, and added with a smile that I was not returning to shore until I had the information for which I had come. Lastly, I reminded him that he, being a journalist and understanding the difficulties of the profession, might see fit to acquaint a brother-journalist with the real facts concerning his unannounced visit to "Seward's Icebox."

"Ah," he smiled back, "but that's where you're wrong. Alaska is no more of an icebox than Rhode Island. Its climate is similar in some respects, and many of its harbors are not ice-locked at all in winter. It's a grand country, peopled by a race of sturdy pioneers and their children, and governed intelligently and efficiently.

"But your argument is good. I had not thought of divulging my reasons for making this trip until after submitting my report to the President. However, I believe I'll tell you one or two reasons and you can draw your own conclusions concerning the rest.

"We have just completed making the first

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voyage of a battleship up the Inland Passage at full speed, convoyed by Admiral Rodman and his flotilla of destroyers."

This was a news thunderbolt. I was not prepared for it. I took my pencil and made notes as fast as I could write; for I knew that if he stopped talking he would lose his trend of thought and perhaps the inclination to continue further.

"This is the first trip that any large American vessels of war have made up this Passage, and it will go down in Navy annals as a remarkable achievement. The voyage was wonderful both from the scenic and historical point of view, and we have proven that in the event of hostilities American war vessels have in the Inland Passage a protective area within which to navigate the dangerous Alaskan coast.

"Furthermore, we inspected mines producing anthracite coal of almost as good quality as the Pennsylvania mines. This means that in the future the Navy will save thousands of dollars, for we will be enabled to utilize this cheap Alaskan coal at all our bases on the Pacific Coast instead of freighting fuel from the Atlantic at great expense."

Secretary Daniels arose as he concluded this

statement, asserting that he was not at liberty to say more. The interview had meant much to me and, elated over my success, I thanked him for his kindness.

A few moments later he accompanied me on deck, where we met Mr. Payne and the persistent "Mac." The latter was in excellent spirits, disclosing to me that Payne had furnished him a graphic description of the agricultural wealth of our territorial "Icebox." The launch was summoned by an officer, on which the two secretaries were to go ashore. At a sharp command hundreds of sailors began lining the sides of the great steel fighting ship. Buglers assembled near the gangway and the dreadnought's officers formed a line through which the secretaries passed to the gangway.

At this moment I espied on the gangway our old enemy, the officer who earlier in the morning had so threateningly barred our entry to the ship. I wonder what his thoughts were when he saw us victoriously descending the gangway in the company of the ship's two famous guests. This is the type of well-deserved thrill a reporter gets now and then.

The fast navy launch skimmed over the water toward the dock while Mr. Daniels and

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Mr. Payne bid us goodbye and good luck, both adding with generous smiles that we had "won" our interviews handily over the other reporters.

That evening we were among those of the press that attended a dinner at the Arctic Club in honor of Seattle's two distinguished guests. After Mr. Daniels' speech he leaned across the table and whispered to me:

"You see, I didn't give you away."

The next morning my paper in New York City was the only newspaper in the country that published the correct facts concerning that memorable voyage to Alaska.

CHAPTER III

THE FORGETFUL IDEALIST

EDWARD JOHN MORETON DRAC PLUNKETT, eighteenth baron of Dunsany, one of the foremost dramatists and poets of his age, slipped into New York City late in the fall of 1919, quite unannounced and unheralded. Had it not been for some enterprising publicity agent, he would have remained there at his leisure, far from the madding crowd, until the time came for his return to the Emerald Isle.

When it became known in newspaper circles that Dunsany had arrived and was concealed on the eleventh floor of the Belmont Hotel, a covey of reporters sprang from apparently nowhere and attached themselves to the hotel lobby. Compared with "covering" the late Mr. Caruso's operations and illnesses, the siege of Dunsany was many times more forceful, and equally non-productive. For hours at a time one walked the lobby, kept watch over the elevators and side entrances, and endeavored

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to get in touch with the shy Irish peer over the wires. The bellboys, the elevator operators, the telephone girls and the clerks soon began to detest the very sight of us, and yet the siege continued. After the fourth day, a plan was formulated and a council of war decreed upon. It was decided that we should all draw lots the following morning and that the two men drawing the shortest pieces of paper would be elected to climb the inside fire-escape, in an attempt to dodge the floor clerk and reach the floor of the bashful poet. It was further stated that the men who did it, if their mission should prove successful, would be permitted to keep the general text of their material and "beat" the others on the story.

The next morning two newspaper men set forth. None of the others pretended to take any notice and yet each man was secretly wishing in his heart that the two elected to fulfill the contract would succeed and the siege be at an end. Besides that we were ever fearful that some titian-haired siren of the press might be able to influence the "bashful peer" to give her a personal interview, and we would not have blamed him had he done it; yet what a mean,

cringy, feeling it would be, to have to acknowledge defeat to the opposite sex.

Twenty minutes had scarcely elapsed before we noticed our compatriots firmly clasped by the house-detective emerging from the "express" elevator. What a dire sensation and what a sad one immediately arose from within. We saw, nor heard, no more of those who had attempted the impossible, and yet as the afternoon advanced we brazenly decided to make another try. Therefore the lots were again tossed, and woe betide, for mine happened to be among the others.

With grim determination to do or die, my compatriot and I set forth. We were even more wary than our predecessors, for instead of entering the fire escape at the main floor, we sauntered leisurely up to the mezzanine, where for several minutes we observed all those who were seated there. At last just as casually we decided that it was about time to make the attempt; so glancing at our watches as though bent upon an important engagement, we set forth. The door opened, the stairs clear, dim red lights at occasional intervals, and up, up, until it seemed we had climbed entirely out of the hotel and were ascending

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the flagpole. At last the single word "ELEVEN," shone forth, but we felt as though "EXCELSIOR" had taken its place.

We had encountered no one, and we began to feel a great deal more self-assured, yet the most difficult part of the journey was still ahead. To be exact as we had figured it, the desk-clerk's booth lay one hundred feet to the left of the fire escape floor entrance; Lord Dunsany's sitting room should have been at least fifty feet to the right of this same entrance. The point was, could we make the sitting room before the floor clerk had seen us, and even were that possible, would we be admitted into the sitting room?

Looking through the keyhole revealed nothing, and we finally decided to take a chance and advance. A few seconds later we were in the hall, no one was in sight, but the floor clerk arose as we appeared. She was coming toward us; I turned and walked in the opposite direction. My companion followed and a minute later we were before the room we desired to enter. There was but one thing to do, in view of the circumstances and—we did it. Without knocking, or asking permission, we opened the door of the apartment

ahead of us, slipped quickly within and closed the door behind us, while a muttered mumbled conversation from where we had come could be heard calling for assistance.

The room in front of us was empty, and we were for a moment taken aback, fearing lest we had entered the wrong suite and would be held as burglars. But our fears were soon allayed. The door opened at the other end of the room and a stately, elderly lady entered. On perceiving us, she hesitated and then called back into the room from which she had come.

"Oh, Edward, here are the two young men you expected."

I admit I was startled, and I solemnly prayed with a most fervent hope that the "two young men expected" would never turn up, at least not until after we had had time to leave the hotel. My companion nudged me and giggled foolishly.

The lady told us to take off our things and make ourselves comfortable. She then busied herself at a writing desk, on which we perceived a portable typewriter. It was indeed interesting to know that poetry was being conceived upon a machine of rake and thunder.

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What would the honorable Shakespeare say could he but for a moment glance at the up-to-dateness of his contemporary?

We were seated upon a soft, comfy sofa, and had plenty of time to glance around the room before the poet entered. Although it was not what might be called disorderly, it could not have been termed "in perfect shape." Papers and stray bits of clothing were scattered at odd intervals in strange, unknowing corners, and the writing desk and its surroundings were the most noticeable pieces of furniture. As we were wondering at our luck in entry, etc., we saw coming through the door from what we presumed must be the bedroom, a singularly tall masculine figure. Six feet and seven inches may be termed "singular," especially to those who have other beliefs about a man who lives on ideals and suppositions.

He was dressed in a loose-fitting, gray suit, and wore long brown shoes and green socks, which were hanging in most unconventional angles below the tip end of his trousers. A monocle, which had an annoying way of slipping out of his eye when he tried to discern anything so comical as the "two young men he

had expected," added to the outfit of this picturesque character of modern literature.

He came slowly toward us and we knew full well what was traversing his brain, nor were we surprised when he spoke:

"I fear, or I think, or by the way, I mean I believe, there is some mistake, is there not?"

The question hung heavily, and my companion nudged me as though it were my duty to reply. For a moment there was an awkward pause, and then Lady Dunsany broke the silence, telling her husband that she had to be off, as she had a pressing engagement. She warned him not to be late for tea and to meet her in the hall forty minutes later.

Forty minutes, could we stick it through? The door closed and the poet's monocle took another flop, luckily suspended by a ribbon, it fell gently to his chest. He wiped it carefully with a silk handkerchief, stretched his eyes and face, and slowly seated himself upon the sofa. We who had arisen at his approach, settled ourselves on two easy chairs and commenced to talk.

When our motive for being in the room had been explained, we digressed even further, enough to tell his Lordship how we had

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reached his room, the penalties for failure, now that we were there, and the long weary vigils of the other newspaper men downstairs.

At this moment the telephone bell rang and the poet jumped up and walked quickly over to the wall. He took up the receiver and awaited the voice. We too heard it, and we pitied the poor usurper of the wire.

"Could I speak with the Lord?" she was saying, "I'm a little girl from Englewood, and I'd like to have a few words from his mouth to use in our weekly, to-morrow."

Down came the receiver with a bang, and the peer turned upon us:

"There is one thing which annoys me more than anything I have experienced in the last ten years of my life, and that is that miserable instrument, invented by one of your countrymen, who was imbued with perhaps the same amount of—(ahem) nerve, shall we call it, as you. Some night I shall find myself, furtively stealing, knife in hand, to the wall wherein this machine lies. When I next hear its tingling cry I shall slowly but stealthily bisect its ligaments of torture.

"I have one great question to ask of all Americans, and that is, why so many persons

insist upon ringing me up; and yet, when I try to communicate with some poor peaceful friend, it takes me hours to make the connection."

The ice was broken, and as it segregated and flowed down stream we began to realize how very human this poet proved to be. His entire manner was one which attracted the listener, gave him courage and interest. I must admit Lord Dunsany is one of the few men I have ever met who have held my complete attention while listening to them. There was a freedom and jollity of speech and a grace of expression seldom found in men of his vocation, at first acquaintance.

We asked him why he did not care to be interviewed, and he replied:

"Shortly after I arrived here from the steamer, the other day, somebody rang me up and asked me what I thought of New York. I was taken aback and very much perturbed, and I was, my wife informed me, very rude. I had been here just twelve hours, most of which I spent far from New York because I was down deep amid snow-white linen.

"Coming into a country the eyes see the things that exist, but it is the soul only that

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can give the answer. I want to get down to the place where the ideals start, where the raw material begins, and then I can tell you what I think of your city."

At last he had said something different, something away from the cut-and-dried-phrases, usually the "last word" in all foreigners. Our pencils began to work and our fingers limbered up for the test that might be coming. Dunsany was gazing far off into the distance, and we gazed for a moment with him.

Born in 1878 at Dunsany Castle, his father's estate in Ireland, his history bore for a moment the vision which he himself was giving it. His name and ancestry are said to be the third oldest in Irish history, for the earliest records show that in 1462 the baronetcy was granted by patent to a Dunsany. The first peer was a son of Sir Christopher Plunkett, deputy governor of Ireland, under Sir Thomas Stanley and the Duke of York. Sir Christopher married the heiress of the Lord of Killeen, and his eldest son succeeded to what became the line of Fingall. The second son was made the first baron, but the twelfth baron was the first to conform to the Established Church.

It is said that the name Dunsany is of Danish

origin, but that the ancestors settled in Ireland sometime before the Roman conquest. The present Lord Dunsany was educated at Eton and Sandhurst (the British West Point). Besides being a literary man, he has spent many years in the army, and in 1898 served in the Coldstream Guards, in 1901 in South Africa, and in 1914 received a commission as Captain in the Fifth Royal Inneskillling Fusiliers. At the commencement of hostilities he went to Gallipoli, but was fortunate in that he was never hurt; however, three years later, in the Dublin riots, he was severely wounded and spent weary months in the hospitals in England. He later returned to the British front in France, and up until June, 1919, was stationed with the Third American Army on the Rhine.

Finally he mused a reply, which we realized would be the text of our interview:

"We all want to get back to civilization again, and it is the solemn duty of every one of us to pull together. I am an imperialist of the less violent type. I freely admit I do not love the English, yet I held three commissions in the British Army at times when the United

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Kingdom needed every one of us, and no one dared question or impeach my loyalty.

"Some of us will help in the reconstruction by laying a brick, others will help by conceiving a new idea. Everybody cannot build a house, nor can every one write a book. As in war time, we each have some individual thing we can do a little better than our neighbor, and so in peace time it is our duty to put to the test that little individual thing and make it stand the pressure the world is grasping for.

"Foch saved Paris with his counter-attack in 1918. He would have been helpless had it not been for the fresh, young American troops whom he wove in and out through the lines of the exhausted French and British. And even those troops would have been helpless, had they not had an ideal for which to fight.

"Fancy, which upheld the weak, saved the world. I am but a dreamer, I am but a worker in fancy, but I am here in America to do my bit in the reconstruction of the literary world.

"Artists deal with more than fancies. They portray them upon the canvas, and their ideals spring to life when those who lay the bricks

perceive them. Yet an artist seldom gets his inspiration from any one, save the poet.

"We all help one another. When everything is over and everything is built in a city; when the business is done, and the social activities are completed, a fancy remains. That is where we dramatists begin.

"Poets deal with what lies beyond motives. We search for a purpose, an object, in everything the layman does. We endeavor to magnify and enlarge that object so that it will assume shape and form and become of common interest. A poet must have his head in the clouds and his feet upon the earth. Up until the time when I prepared to enter Eton, I was never allowed to read anything save the Bible, and occasionally Grimm's Fairy Tales. I wanted to have my mind free from those things which might corrupt it; and so to-day I keep my thoughts chiefly above what is going on, that is why I cannot answer your questions direct, until I have learned to see from whence they come."

At this moment the telephone bell jingled again, and in a much less furious tone the poet took up the receiver. It was his wife, and she was advising him to hasten downstairs. He

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hung up the receiver and turned toward us:

"And so, young men, you have it. I could continue rambling in my brain to you, until the end of this beautiful day, yet my wife who is, good woman, no respecter of newspapers or newspaper men, must have her way, and I, the dutiful supporter must flee to her side."

He laughed and held out his hand. My companion took it and went out of the door. I grasped it, but he was gazing out of the window. The room faced the Commodore Hotel and the lights from its windows, for it was now well after dark, made queer little reflections.

"That's a beautiful sight," I heard him say. "The artist could paint the picture, the builder could lay the bricks, but the masterpiece of the ages would be what the poet would say of the reflections. I wonder if the architect who designed that hotel ever thought for a moment of the symmetry of those windows in daytime, and their absolute entanglement by night. A scattered hair-brained crew, they make me think of soldiers in ragged formation in Soviet Russia by night, while in the daytime they are the saviors of salvation, your khaki boys of America."

The bell was ringing again, and then for once I had the supreme pleasure of hearing the great poet swear. He asked me to pick up the receiver while he went to get his hat. The operator wished to tell me that his wife ordered him to descend at once.

I hastened to his side, and as I entered the bedroom, a sight greeted my eyes. Strewn all over the place were clothes and hats, pieces of paper and shoes. In the center of the whirlwind stood the poet, with anger bursting from his cheeks. He had lost his hat, and he was not leaving a stone unturned in order to find it. The hat in question was resting calmly on the corner of the dressing table mirror, and when I drew his attention to it, he made a wild bound in its direction, placed it firmly upon his head and tore out of the apartment. I followed, and we rang for the elevator. Just before it arrived, Dunsany realized he had failed to lock the door. We both ran back. Persons standing in the hall must have thought us quite insane. It took some minutes fumbling to find the key, and finally the door was closed.

Another elevator came by. We entered and flew downwards. Just before arriving, he said

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good-bye to me and I took the side door of the hotel to the street.

The shops were shining brightly, and away up in the Metropolitan tower the specks of light gleamed as though from a thousand candle power.

"A scattered, hair-brained crew, they make me think of soldiers in ragged formation in Soviet Russia, by night, while in the daytime they are saviors of salvation, your khaki boys of America." It was a beautiful thought, and one which I have held in mind every time I gazed upon New York's incandescence by night.

*Canadian
Rockies*

CHAPTER IV

INTO THE FROZEN NORTH

WE were seated round a camp fire, high up on a bank overlooking the Spray River, south of Banff, in the Canadian Rockies, one Autumn evening. On all sides of us arose tremendous timbers and impenetrable evergreen underbrush. Behind us, in among the trees, were two tents, emanating from which one could hear the rhythmic snoring of their inhabitants.

Through the smoke a motley gathering could be distinguished, and the fiery red of a Mounted Policeman's jacket added color to the scene. Two trappers, tired from a long day's walk through the Kananaskis Valley, leisurely smoked their brier-root pipes; while an Eskimo tanned by the "suns" of Alberta, leaned on his elbow as if straining to hear every word. An aviator, whose chief occupation was that of driving his flying chariot over the nearby lakes, was also in the gathering, and accompanying him a stalwart cowboy from the plains.

The camp was that of Vilhaljmar Stefansson, Arctic explorer and president of the Explorers' Club of America. He had been camping at this picturesque spot for several weeks, whilst completing a book describing the last trip he had made into the Arctic Regions. The notes and other data collected during that time were in safekeeping with Storker Storkensen, his faithful admirer, and second mate of the vessel on which he had completed his last trip; but Storkensen preferred the pine boughs beneath the tent to the curling campfire smoke.

We had been talking for several hours, but seldom had our conversation drifted to the Arctic Regions, for Mr. Stefansson was known to dislike discussing himself or his achievements. As the night progressed, and the friendship first gained was strengthened, we took courage, and asked Mr. Stefansson to tell us a tale, such as had never before been seen in print.

For a long time he did not reply, but it was easily seen that his calm features were undergoing a terrible struggle, for when he finally spoke a shadow of a tear came into his eyes:

"It was during the winter of 1916-17, when we were camped on Melville Island, some five-

hundred miles northeast of the eastern portion of Alaska," he began, "that one of the most important morale lessons I have ever known was taught me.

"Our winter quarters were constructed from huge cakes of ice, joined together with snow and hail. The walls of each of our five round-houses, as well as the floors, were covered with the skins of seal, bear and caribou. In two of these houses, Storkensen and I, together with fifteen Eskimos had built our quarters. Our dogs and sleds were in two other houses and our food and equipment in another.

"The nearest island to ours was Victoria Island, sixty miles across a frozen sea. Next to it was Banks Island, a distance of one hundred miles from our winter quarters. The *Polar Bear*, one of my ships, aboard which was one white man in charge of twelve Eskimos, was frozen in on Victoria Island. She was well provisioned, but had a scarcity of sugar. The *North Star*, another one of my ships on which there were several men and a quantity of provisions, was frozen in on the north-western end of Banks Island; and on the south-eastern corner of this same locality I had a third ship, the *Mary Sachs*, commanded by

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Captain Barnard, with Charlie Thompson, another white man, and twenty Eskimos. This vessel was the only one of the three that was floating, and being well provisioned we had no fear for her safety; so when I had left Captain Barnard I had instructed him that should any vessel pass by during our absence, with mail or news for me, he was to keep such things aboard the *Mary Sachs*, until he should hear from me. I had firmly impressed upon him that he must not undertake to bring mail to me no matter how important it should prove to be.

"As you may remember, during the years of 1914 and 1915 my Arctic exploration party were believed to have been lost, and it was not until early 1916 that the news reached home that we were still alive. In the summer of the latter year, a whaling schooner, the *Herman*, from San Francisco, with Captain Pedersen in charge, called at the *Mary Sachs*, and left four hundred pounds of mail for me.

"Meanwhile during the same summer, I had left my winter quarters on Melville Island to see how my men were faring on the *North Star*; and knowing that the supply of sugar was very low on the *Polar Bear*, I had or-

dered the Eskimos who were with me to carry loads of three hundred pounds each, and place them in caches along the northern portion of Banks Island, for the purpose of relaying them to the *Polar Bear*. But after three of these caches had been made and filled we had a very bad storm, and it was all we could do to reach Melville Island ourselves, so that the *Polar Bear* never received her full complement of sugar.

"As the autumn came on, Captain Barnard thought that I should have my mail, and ignoring my commands decided that he would see that I received it. Furthermore, he thought that, as he had not heard from us, something disastrous had happened, and that it was up to him to see what it was. He grew more and more restless, and on October 26, 1916, could no longer restrain himself; so he and Charlie Thompson set forth with two sleds and two dog teams to find me.

"Now, Barnard and Thompson were both Alaskan guides and were accustomed to traveling with dog and sled almost all year long over the frozen north. Neither of them, however, realized the full value of food, and neither of them had ever been out more than

a week at a time without seeing signs of something human.

"At this time of year, in that region of the Arctic, there is no real daylight, never light enough to read a newspaper out-of-doors, but a constant sort of twilight prevails.

"Captain Barnard and Charlie Thompson had taken with them enough provisions to last fifteen days, rice and seal-fat for the dogs, but had neglected to bring any sugar. In Alaska, as in the United States, they had regarded sugar as a luxury, something with which to sweeten tea or coffee, so to them it had never been a necessity. They could not regard it as I did, the most essential nourishment a man can have in the north.

"The distance to Melville Island was four hundred miles, but in Alaska one could travel that distance in ten days over smooth, snowy trails, provided one had a good team of dogs. However, it took Barnard and Thompson just fifteen days to reach the *North Star*, which was less than a third of the distance, and here they replenished their larder and started out to reach us. Five days later they came upon our first cache, and by signs which we discovered later on they took most of the hard

bread, raisins and tobacco, but they did not even touch a sack of sugar. It must have been well over a week before they reached our second cache, and we found it in the same condition as the first—provisions gone, but not a trace of having handled a single bag of sugar.

“And two weeks later they reached the third and last cache. and here they must have camped a few days, for we found charred sticks, and burnt matches, but as before, the sugar untouched. Almost two months after they had started they reached the Bay of Mercy, on the northeastern side of Banks Island; they were evidently having a hard time to procure food, for we found signs of frozen fish having been chopped in the ice.

“Here they must have placed their sleds on the frozen sea and set forth across an open stretch to reach my camp, some hundred miles away, but they never got further than twenty miles from shore, whether on account of an opening in the ice or an ice storm, we never knew. They turned back leaving a quantity of second-class mail, one of their sleds and the frozen bodies of under-fed dogs. On the handle bars of the sled we found a note

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scribbled by hands that must have been nearly frozen. It was dated December 22nd—the shortest day of the year.

“We left our cache on ice twenty miles east from this point; we are out of grub and our dogs are dying; we have your mail which we are taking with us.”

“They then went back to Banks Island with one sled and ten dogs, but when they reached the shores of the Bay of Mercy, they were obliged to chop their sled in two, for being famished and very weak neither they nor their dogs could manage to pull their equipment any farther.

“In January I sent a party across the frozen sea to our sugar cache on Banks Island. Each cache is protected from roving animals by a trap or pitfall of some sort or other, and often we catch polar bears, foxes, seals and occasionally musk-ox in them. Storkensen was in charge of this party, and twenty miles from the Bay of Mercy he found the first sled and some of the mail, but he also found the piece of paper, which told the tale. Hurrying swiftly on they reached the last cache a week later, and they carefully examined it too, for a seal just recently caught was found in the trap,

but though much of the provisions were gone, the sugar was untouched.

"Between this and the next cache they found a deep valley formed by snow slides, and all about it, dried fragments of caribou skin. Storkensen's curiosity was aroused, so they commenced digging into a hole that looked as though it might be the winter quarters of a silver fox. After they had dug four feet one of the Eskimos perceived something white and glistening and, mustering all the English that he knew, exclaimed with great eagerness, 'Salt-pork'; for to his manner of thinking this was one of the greatest luxuries of the frozen north. Storkensen ran up, and they dug around the glistening white morsel, only to reveal the shoulder of a frozen man.

"A thorough discovery showed the rest of the body, and they all recognized Charlie Thompson, who had frozen, evidently while sleeping. He was so thin that every bone protruded above his skin, and his eyes were so far sunken into his skull that it is doubtful whether he could see when he had died. But his body was so well preserved that at first they thought he was only sleeping.

"The search party kept on, and late in

February, 1917, found at the second cache a quarter of the last sled. It was all chopped up, and we believe the man must have done it with his hands in a vain endeavor to light a fire. Although the bag was filled with sugar, not a sack had been turned over—not a sack examined. The search continued until May, but they never found a trace of Captain Barnard's body, the dogs, the rest of the sled, nor the mail.

"The mail would have been a story in itself had I been spared the tragedy of receiving it, for it was the first mail sent to me, after it became known that I was not lost, and that I was still alive in the Arctic Circle. The lives of the two men would surely have been saved if they had only recognized that sugar was a food and not a condiment."

As Mr. Stefansson finished his story I saw by the dim light of the smouldering fire between us the tears that were in his eyes, and gazing with him into the dying embers I too could see a white, glistening shoulder, eighteen lean, frozen dogs, and the dim form of Captain Barnard, who seemed to be remonstrating that disobedience was not one of the assets of a faithful explorer.

CHAPTER V

HYPOCRISY

SOME persons live for notoriety, some die for it, while some have it merely thrust upon them. In my short experience as a journalist, I have found that above all other things in life, the public, no matter who they be, with very few exceptions revel in publicity. And the exceptions to this rule are not the exceptions one would usually suspect.

Theodore Roosevelt was possibly the best known man in this generation, throughout the civilized world. Whatever his misgivings, and they were mighty few, people of these times knew Colonel Roosevelt's every move and gesture, and many of them knew or thought they knew his voice. From darkest Africa to the land of barren ice and fields of snow; from the imperial thresholds of European courts, to the rice fields of interior Asia, the name Roosevelt was respected. We knew Colonel Roosevelt not as a man of great

wealth or social position, although in our heart of hearts we also knew that he possessed both of these, but we knew him as a man who accomplished things, a fearless, courageous man, yet withal as endearing and kind as the littlest child. The ideal American was typified in all that Roosevelt said or did, and America never held such a prestige among nations as she did during his administration.

Sometimes we ask ourselves how Colonel Roosevelt reached the pinnacle of world prestige; sometimes we are inclined to wonder what method he used to attain the place he made for himself in this great nation of ours, yet we seldom stop to consider that had it not been for careful, dignified, publicity methods, Roosevelt would probably not have been able to gain the place among the peoples of the world that he did. The quickest incentive to fame, to any pedestal above that occupied by all us plain mortals, is through publicity, provided the publicity is handled with efficiency.

There are many people in the United States to-day who resort to this method of commanding public attention, if but for a few moments;

there are thousands of people, who live and even die, in order to secure but a line's notice of their achievements in the public press. America is filled with highly developed publicity agents, each with a new thought of his own, some new suggestion, some spark to attract the weary eyes of the public, and very few businesses to-day are conducted without some form of publicity as a background. We may not realize it, and most of us do not, yet we are taken in by a new sight at least once every day. The wary street-hawker, the glistening shop windows, the lassie in the latest fashion, all are symbols of something deeper than most imaginations can penetrate.

Some one once remarked that doing business without publicity was like winking at a girl in the dark; you know what you are doing, but nobody else does. He was quite correct in his statement, for publicity when properly carried out is so subtle that very few people catch on, until it is time for them to know—and then it doesn't matter.

Newspaper offices are the constant prey of all sorts and kinds of publicity stunts. The flagrant, matter-of-fact departmental store pamphlets, down to the mysterious "tip," are

all part and parcel of the same game. Sometimes the editors see through the game, but occasionally they are also caught in the trap so carefully laid by these seekers after the golden fleece of free publicity.

Probably the most notorious manifesto in recent years was that which occurred in New York less than two years ago. Many of those who take time enough to read these lines will remember the African nobleman who landed with great pomp upon these shores in the winter of 1920, announcing that he had come to this country in quest of his long-lost daughter. For days the press teemed with excitement. Flocks of newspapermen and women followed every move which the foreigner made. When he went out at night the exact details of all his movements were recorded. At last the great day arrived. It was announced that the little girl, now over twenty years of age, had been found in a tenement house on the lower east side. The press photographers and a large group of curiosity seekers presented themselves upon the scene. For a time no one noticed, and then all of a sudden the whole monstrous plot became bared, for cameras were filming the crowds, individually and in separate groups,

and from the alley entrance there emerged a beautiful satellite of the silver screen. Two months later, when the motion picture was presented, New York City realized how grossly it had been "taken in."

In February, 1920, six months after the occurrence described above, the Night City desk of the former *New York Herald* received a hurry call for a reporter. The nature of the assignment was not known, nor the name of the person who wished to communicate to the public through the medium of the press, the only specifications being the hotel and room number.

At ten o'clock that evening I presented myself at a private dining room on the first floor of the Vanderbilt Hotel. Voices could be heard from within as well as a strong odor issuing from innumerable cigars. I opened the door and saw before me a large number of reporters seated in a semi-circle smoking and drinking some delectable-looking liquor. At the head of the room, clothed in Oriental costume of much imagination, was seated a gentleman who had violently opposed my entry into journalism!

For a moment I believed I saw him wince,

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and then realizing that, as far as I went, "his game" was up, he motioned me quietly to a seat. A valet, arrayed in much the same manner as his employer, brought to me choice morsels to eat and drink, but I partook of neither.

And in a whimsical voice of the East, he continued the discourse I had interrupted. He was describing a new menace to the Far East, and his solution for a suitable cure. It was a scheme to educate the Far Easterners into the manners and customs of our Occidental world; a bold, carefree plan, but to one who knows the tendencies and sensibilities of the Far East, a plan which could never attain much success.

"This is one of the great epoch-making schemes of the world," he went on. "Ancient China civilized is almost too remarkable to be believed. It is not an unreasonable supposition that China may some day be vital. Germany is working vigorously to acquire strength in man power and resources from Bolshevik Russia. Germany still looks forward to war and domination through it. Germany is trying to absorb material strength from Russia and again become a world menace.

"A plan has already been launched and is rapidly under way whereby the French Government, with the co-operation of the Chinese Government, is receiving Chinese students for one year's service. It is my duty to tell Americans these facts and try to influence them to aid the great miseries of these nations. I want to form a Committee in America to aid in this great undertaking, and we want several hundred thousand dollars, etc., etc."

At this moment I began to see through the clouds which had first obscured my horizon, and the sunshine of my vision soon became very powerful. I arose, seemingly to take my leave. The speaker stopped his sing-song long enough to breathe a sigh—perhaps of relief. The valet motioned me to the door. I did not, however, take the proffered advice. Instead I went to a telephone concealed near the window, and picking up the receiver said in a low voice, but audible enough to be heard around the room:

"The house detective, please."

Before the words were out of my mouth the other men were upon their feet, dazed, bewildered, confused. I believe, for an instant they thought I was a prohibition agent, and

that they would all spend the night in the Tombs.

When questioned, I replied that the "freak" to whom they were listening would explain. With one accord they grouped themselves around my adversary. What could he say, and what dared he say? Then, out of sheer helplessness he called me aside. We spoke in lowered tones for a few seconds, and he requested all the newspapermen to leave him.

When they had gone my irritator held out his hand and begged me to forgive him. I felt I had done him enough harm, and so we decided to drop the entire controversy. I am not at liberty, however, to mention this gentleman's name, but I may say, that the winner of a number of foreign decorations and an important figure in a famous allied war relief fund was he in whose heart of hearts was an insensate desire for notoriety.

The American system of advertising agencies was originated by Orlando Bourne in 1828. He was followed twelve years later by V. B. Palmer, who established agencies in Philadelphia, New York and Boston, and in 1860 the system was vastly extended, so as to permit

companies forming all over the United States.

The general system of advertising companies is to direct the movements of paid columnar advertising in newspapers and magazines, but there are other would-be "publicity" agencies which make it their duty to promulgate the interests of some "would-be" well-known persons by using the space allotted to current news for that purpose. The office of the *Herald* was almost daily besieged with all kinds of agents seeking space for the photographs and news items of their respective clients. It was not an uncommon sight to see these persons offering sums of money a great deal larger than a reporter ever expected to gaze upon, displayed in a tempting manner to under-paid employees on condition that if they could, by hook or crook, insert the desired information, they should partake.

Much of the material inserted in social columns and many of the photographs in the society sections of American newspapers to-day do not represent those who are really active in the various lines, but rather those whose publicity agents are active for them.

It is the same way with most of the social magazines of our times, especially some that

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resort to terms of fixed amounts for "legalized publicity." One periodical in particular has a perturbing way of approaching one once a year, with contracts whose contracting reason is carefully hidden. It is stated that if the client wishes to release a fixed sum, none but the good will appear in its columns during the year. If, on the other hand, the cash payment is not forthcoming, he is given to understand that everything which is mean and irregular will appear. And sad to relate, many persons are "led astray" by this dire threat. Those periodicals are merely paid advertising columns, wherein one may read all the choice bits of scandals concerning one's friends, and all the flattering bits of gossip about oneself.

There are other agencies that make it a business to approach people whose names constantly appear before the public. After the desired introductions, they continue their obnoxious plans by assuring their clients that should any scandal appear, or be about to appear in the press, they will positively not permit it to go any further, and will "hush up" all headline stories. To those who are inclined to follow the gay, white way, or to those whose chief pastime in life is to intrigue with other

people's wives, this is a cheerful proposition. The fatted calf is seldom caught. It is astonishing how many people believe the story which these concerns disseminate, and it is astonishing how many important names appear on their books. Very few persons realize that no agency of this kind can exist in newspaper circles without being abhorred by decent newspapermen. Nobody can check news of value once it is launched except the managing or controlling editor of a newspaper. Therefore, the functioning of these agencies ends, as soon as they have gained their reward.

There are other people who, when their nearest and dearest relatives are at the point of death, when they know they will have but a few minutes to be with them, call up the newspaper offices and tell the reporters that their next of kin is dying. I remember the first time I was initiated into this manner of news. It was just before the hour of "press" one evening, and the City Editor asked me to answer the telephone.

Armed with pad and pencil I entered the booth and picked up the receiver. Somebody was weeping at the other end, and when I asked what I could do, a tearful voice replied:

"It's about John McKeef. He's dying, and I want you to say he was a good man, and lived a good, clean life."

And with that the woman hung up the receiver. Rather bewildered I turned in the information to the desk. The City Editor in an apparent rage asked me who John McKeef was, where he lived, what he was dying of, and a hundred and one other questions. I looked blank and said I didn't know.

The next time I heard a sobbing voice, I renewed my courage and demanded sternly:

"What do you want?"

"Is this a reporter," was the reply.

I answered that it was, and requested a quick answer stating that I had other things to do besides taking down notes over the telephone.

"Well," said the voice, evidently stifling a sob, "Isaac died to-night. He was a good man and deserves to be placed in the morning paper."

I replied that I would see what I could do, but that I wanted detailed information.

"Isaac Rosenbaum, of 15 Hammerstein Place, a master plumber for twenty years, and an electrician of prominence, died a few

moments ago at his home. He died of ptomaine poisoning, and was ill only three hours before his death. He was a very handsome man, not too tall nor too short. He had an excellent voice and sang at house-parties and other entertainments. He leaves a son, two daughters and a wife. The children are all grown up, and one of them has children of her own. Mr. Rosenbaum liked his grandchildren very well. He will be buried day after to-morrow at the Broadway Tabernacle," and so on with a list of the pall bearers, etc.

The next morning the following announcement appeared in the obituary columns:

"Isaac Rosenbaum, of 15 Hammerstein Place, master plumber, died at his home last night. Funeral services will be held at the Broadway Tabernacle to-morrow afternoon."

After weeks of obituary notices, which usually come in around nine or ten in the evening, I became accustomed to this kind of publicity. Reporters claim that some poor souls die for the sake of getting their names in the papers.

One evening, about a year ago, I had one of the weirdest incidents I ever handled.

The accustomed sobbing voice replied to my

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query, and then I was given a long, detailed description of the gentleman in question. When I asked from what cause he died, I received the following reply:

"Oh, he hasn't passed away yet!"

I then demanded why the lady on the other end of the line had called up.

"Well, he's going to die any minute," she replied, "and I just wanted to acquaint you of the fact."

An hour after we went to press with the first edition that evening, the same weeping voice called me up:

"How much time have I got?" was the question.

"Time for what," I replied.

"Well, time until you go to press?"

I told her we had already gone to press, and that there were twenty minutes left before the second edition went on the rollers.

Exactly eighteen minutes later I picked up the receiver, and the voice announced that her husband had passed away a few seconds previous.

Can any one imagine a right thinking person doing such a thing in order to have the publicity to which she believed she was entitled,

and yet this woman's husband was an influential man in the manufacture of automobile tires.

So again I repeat, some live for publicity, some have publicity thrust upon them, and some die for the germ of notoriety.

CHAPTER VI

JUST A HUSBAND

"WHO is Jaques M——, and why has he gained such a lot of notoriety?" was the question which was foremost on the lips of many people in the Spring of 1920.

For the past few days the dailies of New York had been tossing his name back and forth, as though questioning one another as to its authenticity. A skit had appeared in one of the Pacific Coast weeklies telling of the wedding trip of an important Frenchman, and describing minutely various endearing scenes. It professed to have interviewed the gentleman who claimed to be none other than M—— himself. Yet, who was M——?

The City Desk of the *Herald* was just as anxious as any of the others, and no wonder three staff correspondents and a space reporter were sent to find out. For two days we searched the larger hotels and apartments in

town, for another we telephoned all small apartments listed in the directory, and for the rest of the time we divided the city in quarters and proceeded to make systematic search of every building we had not called up.

It was on the morning of the fifth day, however, while still engaged in the occupation of ringing doorbells that I presented myself before an elderly man at a Madison Avenue address. A little "hard of hearing," and much in need of tonsorial treatment, the squire was endeavoring to tell me that he had heard the name before, but couldn't recollect just where.

At that moment a tall, young woman, Irish in appearance, stopped to ask the way to the nearest post-office and she was about to proceed when my elderly friend continued talking.

"M——, I knowed I'd herd o' him."

The young lady retraced her steps and asked who it was that wished to see M——.

I told her I had a business proposition to discuss and was trying to find his whereabouts.

She asked me to wait a few minutes until she returned, and that she would escort me to his apartment. When she had left the old man told me that he believed she must be a maid, as

she always brought groceries to the building next door.

A half hour later I was ascending a corkscrew staircase, with no signs of ever coming to a halt. Ahead, with much agility, scrambled the girl, with not a sign of exertion.

At the top of the building, nine floors from the street, she stopped and knocked at a door in the rear. I was still panting and utterly exhausted.

For sometime no one answered, then preceded by muttered French oaths from within, the doorway opened and the woman entered. Nothing happened and I began to think I had better descend, as perhaps I had been led to the entrance of a questionable abode.

And then I heard a lot of French words growing suddenly louder. I recognized the conversation as being that of a very angry man, questioning the reason for bringing a "tramp" up to his apartment. The oaths and the language grew so loud that I decided it was high time to knock.

As soon as the rapping at the door had ceased a voice asked me what I wanted, and I replied by asking whether M. Jaques dwelt within. The door opened and a figure attired

in shirt sleeves, over which a painter's smock had been thrown, said that M—— and he were one and the same. I could scarcely believe it, for the man who stood before me bore every resemblance to a hearty middle-westerner.

However, without giving him time to discover my dubiousness, I said that I was a newspaper reporter who wanted to have a short interview with him, and learn something about the reasons for his exclusiveness.

He did not seem to relish the idea, but as footsteps were approaching on the stairs beneath he quietly opened the door and bid me enter. He then disappeared into an adjoining room, while I took a seat near the window, and gazed around the room. It was a tastefully furnished little apartment, with all sorts of water colors adorning the walls.

Pretty soon M—— entered, dressed in city clothes, and seated himself near me. He asked me what I wanted to know, for he had not much time to give me, owing to a pressing engagement downtown. I launched, therefore, into the text of my reason for visiting him. I told him of our efforts to find him, of the story in the western papers, and lastly my own reason

for desiring to meet him, as I wished to know his real profession.

"I am a Jack of all arts," he replied, laughing for the first time. "There is nothing I do excessively well, yet I try to do a little bit of everything, a little bit well."

I told him it was a noble asset, but that I should like to know what he liked best to do, even though he could not do it as well as he should really like to.

Again he laughed, and replied:

"That western paper was right. I like best of all to go on my honeymoon to the Yosemite. I can think of nothing finer, nothing more majestic, nothing more superb. Yet one can't always go on a honeymoon, nor can one always go to the Yosemite.

"Next to that, I believe I like painting best of all. I like to paint as I think, not as my eyes see. I like to feel the brush majestically scaling the walls, building the castles, laying the foundations, cutting the roots and swaying the pedestals of the earth's very incarnation. I like to paint as a master, as a creator, not as a student—for my good friend, I have never taken a lesson in painting in my life."

We were brusquely interrupted by a rapping

at the door. M—— got up and asked what the intruder wanted. From outside the door came a plea that this was the day on which the washing had to go out. Anger spread itself over the quiet vision of the painter, as he shouted (in French) next door:

“Give that d—— woman the wash and tell her to get out.”

Then he turned toward me again and said that people annoyed him so that he did not believe he would be able to stand New York much longer. This gave me the opportunity to ask him how long he had been there and he replied that it was well over six weeks.

For a few moments he remained silent, and as he was about to continue another knock came at the door. Some one had come to repair the piano. In a perfect rage M—— let loose some rather sulphuric oaths again in French.

“I must not take up your time, my good man,” said he, turning toward me again, and smiling almost—pleasantly. “Nor must you take up mine; yet you will want something to say about me, and I shall tell it to you as quickly as possible.

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"I have come to New York as all others do, to see and learn."

We were again interrupted, this time by the young lady who had shown me up the stairs. M—— was well-nigh beside himself, and in undertones (in French) swore with great facility. The lady seated herself beside him on a divan, and turning to me asked me to forgive her husband for being so rude.

I feigned ignorance, and yet I kept my ears wide open. The idiosyncrasies of all those with whom a reporter comes in contact, are amusing.

"I shall continue," resumed M——. "I was telling this reporter, dear, that I had come to New York, as all others do, to see and learn.

"Yes, Europe has much to learn from the new art which America must some day create. A new psychological moment has come to America. It is up to her to seize the opportunity before one of the countries of the old world endeavors to do so.

"America is the most technologically important country on the face of the earth to-day. The rest of the world has to depend greatly on what you manufacture and on your methods of encouraging life. It is therefore up to you to

live up to that reputation and try to create something really new in the line of art as well as in the line of technology."

It was a clever little say-so, and yet from what I had already heard in undertones I did not dare to believe a word of it.

M—— then told me that the lady on his left was his wife. He spoke of her endearingly, and said that there could be no sounder alliance than Irish and Basque. He explained that he was a Basque.

"Basque is the greatest country in civilization. We are a race all of our own, and are of the highest mental development. For example, America was discovered by Basques two hundred years before Columbus. The only real discovery belonging to Columbus was the way to make an egg stand on its end.

"Noah spoke Basque; and Sanscrit and Japanese are but patois derived from the Basque language. In fact, in order to make a people as important as the Basques, French, Henry the Fourth, King of France, was obliged to ennoble all the Basques. I am therefore born in France, since the Basque country belongs to the French, yet all the countries of the world

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are only colonies of the Basque, in the figures of art."

The last few phrases made the decided impression upon my mind that besides being Basque, Jaques was decidedly eccentric. Perhaps he knew it and was putting it all on, and I heartily wished that he would launch forth again in the French undertones, which showed me exactly what he thought.

Before speaking again he took his horn-rimmed glasses and carefully wiped them. He seemed to be deeply engrossed in thinking what else he could tell me, and I was quite aware that the previous bluff of his important engagement had been forgotten.

His wife was the next to break the silence. She told me that M—— had come to America almost a year before, and had gone west immediately. He settled in the artists' colony at Carmel, on Monterey Bay, and sketched a great deal of that coast. Here she had met him, and after a brief flirtation they had been married and by means of a brand new car had gone to the Yosemite Valley, where he had done a lot of painting.

Before his arrival in America, she continued, he had been one of the greatest cartoonists

in Europe, and many of his sketches had been used as recruiting bulletins. In his younger days he had been a master printer on the *Paris Temps*, of which his father was one of the editors. After two years of this work he took a course in architecture in the Beaux Arts. He was the youngest architect at the Paris Exposition in 1900, and the Prince of Wales, afterwards Edward VII, had congratulated him in person. Whilst studying architecture, she continued, he had commenced his collaboration with various French humorist publications. From 1904 to 1910 he published *Le Temoin*, a French daily paper.

Impressionism in painting and "art-nouveau" in jewelry and decorations were against his principles. His last few years he had devoted especially to fashion and above all, decorative arts. She said that in this connection he admired very much the difference between classic furniture and that meeting the modern requirements. Her only reproach against his methods was that he confined himself entirely too much to luxury.

She had scarcely uttered these words before he became immensely angry and (in French) told her to leave the room and not to come

back until she could behave herself. She in turn became indignant, and fearing lest I should be the center of a family row, I arose to go, but M—— would not have it, and in thunderous tones told me to sit down and not to annoy him any more.

I was indeed frightened, so I remained as quiet as possible, scarcely daring to breathe, until the family affairs of the M——s had been straightened.

After a short while he returned, but before he entered the room I heard him telling her that if the blankety-blank reporter next door had not come when he did all would have been well, and that he felt like choking any one who had interrupted his morning's work in such a miserable fashion.

"I have a greater lesson to learn from the skyscrapers, from Broadway illuminated at night, from the tumult of the lower East Side, than from the Place Vendôme or Trafalgar Square," said he, reseating himself on the divan and gazing off into the distance.

"The new form of art for which we are all breathlessly waiting will come from here, from your marvelous America. Your beautiful desire to be the first in everything, from your

taste in luxury to the beauty of your women, is a marvel to us of the old world.

"The skyscrapers are a creation all your own. The landscape of Broadway at night is the most original thing I know of. I am not making fun. I don't mean literally that I like the little dancing mannikins that advertise chewing gum, or the shapeless leg of the lady who shows her hose, yet it's the ensemble to which I refer. I am able to admire America more than most people because I am a foreigner and can tell you her triumphs and her faults.

"I think, however, to be perfectly frank with you, your worst enemies are those who are born in America and never learn good taste. You have created everything but taste. You use your modern ideas with old world taste and they do not fit. Taste is the disease of old people. It comes from the top, not the bottom. Such a new and wonderful nation paralyzes taste. My definition for your new taste is, that when you are old and feeble, and have used up all the ideas you have accumulated in younger days, then it will be time to rearrange new ideas to suit yourself. You

will come to that sometime, and I hope it will be soon.

M—— arose and opened the door.

"I think you know a lot about me that I do not even know myself," he said, "but I must ask you to go now, as I must prepare for supper and for bed. I always retire early, for you see, young man, I am a quiet, peace-loving individual."

I went out of the door, which he quickly closed, and I heard a very loud conversation (again in French) behind me.

"We have made ourselves famous," it was saying, "and all that remains for us to do is to wait until the orders commence to pour in. That young reporter will say we are two of the most interesting people in the city, and we shall have to live up to it."

The next morning when my story appeared on the street, I had carefully camouflaged within its text the real interview, with the silent voice of France as my leading statement. However, I did not mention the street address nor the peace-loving conversation which ensued behind my back.

Two days later M—— sent me a signed photo, as well as a long letter *in French*,

apologizing for his conversation, and all that I had heard the afternoon that I interviewed him, and asking me to think of him only as a plain husband, such as millions of others in all parts of the world.

CHAPTER VII

THE BRIBE

THE Earl of E——, one of the most picturesque figures of the House of Lords, came to America early in 1920 to seek American physicians and be cured from an affliction from which he had long been a sufferer. He was here but a short time before he discovered that his surmises were correct, and that American doctors were the best in the world.

When the Earl arrived in New York, the King of the Belgians was there, and so the notice which foreigners usually gain from our press was not forthcoming. It was therefore not surprising that the publicity agent of one of our largest hotels called the City Editor's attention to the fact that one of Ireland's foremost noblemen was staying at the hotel, and the City Desk, not knowing much about E——, sent the author to learn what he had to say.

A few minutes later I was talking to a physician who told me that the Earl of E—— was not such a sick man as he believed himself to be. Our conversation was interrupted by the entry of an elderly gentleman attired in smoking jacket and bathgown. He paid no attention whatever to us, but motioned to the nurse who was following him, instructing her to place a rocking chair by the window, in which he comfortably arranged himself, and then was covered with a large rug, which he directed the nurse to tuck around him.

While all this was going on I had a good chance to study him, and to form in my own mind my opinion as to his character. From outward appearances he was quite old, with deep-set wrinkles all over his forehead. Closer inspection revealed that he was very fidgety and probably quite temperamental. Nothing seemed to please him unless he could have the satisfaction of knowing that he had said or done it himself. Years of thinking and meditation had left their scars, and the Earl of E—— as I saw him that January morning was not the type of man that Belcharz had so cleverly described about three years before.

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"Well, have you brought your assistant?" he remarked all of a sudden, addressing the doctor at my side.

"No, sir, this is a reporter from a New York City newspaper," replied the doctor, evidently much embarrassed.

"And what the devil does he want with me?" said the Earl, feigning great astonishment. "Am I of enough importance for the American press to realize that I have been here the past ten days?"

I replied that I believed he was, and that I had come to ask him a few questions concerning the reason of his visit to this country and what he intended to do.

My friend the doctor softly withdrew, while the Earl scornfully looked me "inside out." At last he replied:

"I don't mind your first two questions, but I do object strongly to the last one. What I am going to do is my own business, and no reporter can dare question my personal doings. If he does, then I don't want to speak to him. Do you? Answer quick or get out."

I replied that I was sorry I had vexed him by my question, and I hoped he wouldn't take to heart the literal meaning of it. I said,

however, that I hoped he would tell me something so that I would not be obliged to go back to my editor empty handed.

He seemed to realize then that I was with him at his bidding and not so much seeking to meet him for my own good, and finally he told me to draw up a chair. I did so, and came within a few feet of his rocker, in such a position that I could distinctly see every line in his face. For some minutes he said not a word, nor did he move a muscle. Then he glanced slowly out of the window, toward Central Park and northern Manhattan. Several children were playing on the grass nearby the lake, and occasionally a burly-looking policeman passed casually by, swinging his night stick.

"And so you want to know why I came to America?" I realized he was speaking to me. "Well, young man, that's not hard for me to answer."

Again a silence, while I nervously fingered my pencil. Was he never going to tell me? Time was precious, and especially at that hour of the day. When I looked up again he was drawing out a small thin cigarette case. I watched diligently. Carefully opening it he

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withdrew one cigarette and proceeded to thump it up and down in his hand. I found a match, struck it, and gave him a light. He must have noticed that I was not smoking, so he made a move as though to offer me one, too, but thought better of it and continued to speak.

"I have been ill for the last three years with my heart and my lungs; so ill, young man, that sometimes it is hard to realize that I am still alive. Sometimes I feel as though I were a disembodied spirit, my mind leaves me and my thoughts are far from where my body remains. It isn't human, and yet here I am alive, in America; yes, in America."

Another dramatic pause. Although I realized he must be a very sick man and that the doctor's words had not been just, I was beginning to fear I was to interview a second Sir Oliver Lodge, and the recollection of such an event was not wholly pleasant.

"I consulted almost every physician in Great Britain and Ireland, but none of them could cure me. Some told me I had but a few months to live, while others told me my malady was more in thought than in reality. And every day I felt myself sinking further and further

away from all that was real and majestic in life."

The cigarette had burned low and another had taken its place. I again offered a match and it was again accepted. And then *it* happened:

"By the way, young man, do you smoke?" he asked most condescendingly.

I said that I did occasionally.

The nurse re-entered with a medicine of some sort or other, and the Earl told her to get some cigarettes. She returned with a package containing a cheap British cigarette. These he offered me, and I took and lighted one of them. Then he continued:

"I went to the continent, but no one could cure me. It was the same story over and over again. I could not go to Central Europe, for the conditions were too uncertain. Finally my cousin persisted that I should try America. As a last hope, I came to your country."

Another pause, a glance out of the window, and another smoke from the silver case. What kind of weeds were they in that magic case, I wondered to myself. Perhaps it was some kind of medicine? It might even have been a comforting drug! Yet the stubs were

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the same as any others I had seen and mystery continued to shroud their identity.

Another cigarette of the inexpensive brand was offered to me, and with a brief gesture of amazement when I refused to accept, the Earl continued in slow, monotonous tones:

"I arrived in America ten days ago. My son-in-law and his family physician met me. They brought me here, and every day I have been seeing a new specialist. I have only been here ten days, as I told you, and yet I feel that American physicians and their treatment for invalids are one hundred per cent better than the methods of all the foreign physicians put together."

This was evidently a very great compliment for a foreigner of such importance to make, and I underlined it, in order to know when I re-read my notes its whereabouts in the text of the interview. He noticed this and became intensely interested, asking me with much eagerness why I "made those pencil marks" underneath his last phrase.

After I had explained the reason he became very serious. It was evident that in order to say exactly what he meant he was obliged to formulate his words first in his mind and then

broach them to me afterwards, for finally, with another effort, he asked me if I wished to perform a service which would do him no end of good. I replied that anything I could do in my meager way to help him I should be only too pleased to do.

At this little phrase, the silver cigarette case was forced into my hands and I drew from it a neatly rolled aristocrat, which I proceeded to smoke with delight. The Earl smiled sadly and replaced the case in his pocket, and then continued:

"I am giving you this 'fag' in hopes that you will quote me fairly and correctly in everything you may say concerning me. Long have I been the subject of foolish tirades from the newspapers. Long has my life been turned 'inside out' by the elaborating pen of the press. Many times have I tried to secure just rewards for such mis-quotations, in the courts of my country and the continent. Yet seldom have I been able to gain my ends or the justice which I felt I deserved. The power of the profession which you represent is so enormous that Kings and Emperors, Czars and even Presidents, quake before its everlasting phrases and the manner in which it relates episodes to enliven

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the people. I am not scared of the press by any means, yet I do not approve of the methods used by many of its advocates in securing their ends. Therefore, young man, if you will further promise to quote me correctly every time I see you, and every time I tell you anything of importance, I will be even more gracious to you than I have been now, *for I will give you an entire box of expensive cigarettes for your own!*"

He was evidently much elated over this great "bribe," and I was equally elated to see whether he would make true his promise. Who would refuse a box of high-grade cigarettes from the Earl of E——?

"As to your second question, concerning my whereabouts, let me say that I have been advised by your good American doctors to try the climate of Cuba or Bermuda for the winter. In view of what you term the Eighteenth Amendment, I might say that I shall be glad to get into that very good region."

For the first time in our entire conversation, the Earl laughed dryly as though he had concluded a very amusing remark, and went on:

"The freedom of this country is as deplorable as that of Ireland. You cannot drink, you

cannot sing, soon you will not be able to smoke. Yet you call yourselves a great democracy. I believe it is a great hypocrisy."

Here he gurgled another polite laugh.

"In my younger days I was something of a comedian; that is, I was regarded as a clever amateur actor. I could imitate any one who had appeared prominently on the British stage for the preceding quarter of a century. I was in great demand at private theatricals, and my name was frequently mentioned in the current press. And then the greater affairs of life came on, and I left the carefree existence of the amateur stage and entered the drudgery of the Army, and later of the political world. Yet, I haven't forgotten those early days, nor the times when I shone as the Beau Brummel of all the circles in which I moved."

To the layman these confessions may seem rather an exaggeration. To the newspaperman they are but another notch in the stick of experience. Journalists are accustomed to hear all about other people; like lawyers and doctors, they learn probably more scandals and yet more deep truths than any other chosen profession, therefore it was not new to hear

the Earl tell all that he believed, imagined, or could conjure as having happened to him in his earlier days.

"Life as a Lieutenant in the Fourth Battalion Rifle Brigade, in the early eighties, was not without its divertisements. Sometimes we held 'smokers', at which my art was again manifest, and sometimes we gave entertainments to the fairer sex, at which I was always asked to lend my talents. Although my jokes were rusty and my verbs too concocted, I could assuredly add mirth and laughter to the party.

"And besides that, I am quite a shoemaker. When in Parliament, I was the only peer who could claim the distinction of amateur cobbler. It is one of the things of which I am justly proud. Upon a glance I can tell you whether your shoe was hand or factory made. I can, upon closer inspection, soon advise you in what country it was made, from where the leather is derived, and the approximate price the shoe should have cost you."

Abruptly as it had begun, our interview ended, for the hall door opened with a great gusto, and in came two pompous-looking gentlemen, whom I judged at once to be a new group

of physicians. There was much rubbing of hands and stroking of beards, and modulated conversation. The nurse and my friend, the former doctor, came in, and brushing me aside, began re-arranging the patient.

I felt extremely sorry for the old gentleman as I arose to go. It occurred to me that probably his entire life was spent in this way, bespattered with the thought that at occasional moments he could tell some well-wishing youngster the troubles and joys of his existence, and yet what an existence it was!

As I was quietly going out of the door, the Earl of E—— called me back. The doctors looked quizzically at the old man and then at me, and stood aside as the Earl whispered in my ear:

"Remember, laddie, I'll give you something which you reporter chaps don't often get the money to buy, that is, if you quote me correctly."

When I returned to the newspaper office, the editor asked me how much material I could give him, and I replied I had enough to make up a third of a column. He said that he thought from the time I had been away I ought

to have more material than that. However, I realized that the only story I could use was that which concerned the difference between American and European physicians, so I reiterated to the editor that I was sorry, but could only give him a third of a column. Then I went into the morgue (as a newspaper reference room is termed) to hunt up E——'s past.

It was indeed interesting, for his eccentricities were marked by many writers besides myself, and his hobby of shoemaking, as well as his credulous idea of amateur acting, was voiced by many far more talented authors than the one who is recording these notes, yet in all I never could find another writer who claimed to have accepted a gratuity in the form of cigarettes.

I learned many interesting facts concerning the Earl's second wife, however, and chief among these was the admiration which Prince Henry of Prussia had for her before the commencement of hostilities. One account related an amusing incident which occurred in 1913. The Countess was aboard the *Hohenzollern*, the Emperor of Germany's yacht, at the Cowes regatta, in southern England, attending a for-

mal luncheon party. Prince Henry, whom I have already said was very attentive to the Earl of E——'s wife, is reported to have been rebuked in his criticism of English girls. He wanted to show his superiority over the British race and he did not like the rebuke, so he laughingly made the Countess angry, by telling her:

"You are, my dear, a very attractive woman, but you live in an ugly and ill-kept country. Your race is idle and delinquent, and of course your maidens cannot be beautiful. It will take our race of the brave, studious Fatherland to teach your race to brush itself up."

The following morning, armed with a clipping of my story concerning the Earl, I presented myself at his apartment in the hotel. Although the hour was yet early, E—— had gone out for his air, and, his valet informed me, had left instructions that he did not wish to be bothered. He added, however, that if I was the "reporter" who had interviewed his master the day previous, he would give me that which his master had left for me.

A few moments afterwards I seated myself in a quiet corner of the lobby and opened a

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neatly arranged package. A small box of English cigarettes tumbled out. Opening the box I found nine "fags"—the tenth was evidently the one I had smoked the day before from the mysterious silver case.

CHAPTER VIII

THE RECEPTION ON THE SOUND

"*Reporters Keep Out,*" said the gateman at the entrance of Peacock Point, the summer residence of Mr. and Mrs. H. P. Davison, on the North Shore of Long Island.

An angry group of newspapermen listened to the harsh but commanding words. Could it be possible that Henry P. Davison, head of the Red Cross, had ordered this, or had it been decreed by some misguided attendant who did not wish to be bothered by the anxious news-gatherers? These and many other questions were upon the lips of those who had been sent many miles from New York on this glorious Sunday morning, to *get* the news of the Red Cross Tea Party.

After some time spent in arguing with the gate-keeper and inspecting all points of the massive wall which surrounded the grounds, we decided to telephone the main house and ask by whose authority we were to be excluded.

Q—— M——, one of the most descriptive of the young reporters, and to-day probably the most brilliant dramatic critic in metropolitan journalism, was elected to reach Mr. Davidson by telephone and ask him how we could secure our material for the morning editions of the city papers.

There was a gardener's lodge near the gate and into this M—— hied himself, while the rest of us remained outside trying to get a glimpse of what was happening within.

Besides the reporters there were several hundred villagers and persons termed "excitement fans," whom one meets at all kinds of amusements from weddings to fires, clustered around the gates. Several village policemen as well as a squad of State Constabulary formed the guard which kept all inquisitive persons at proper distance from the entrance. Many school children carrying Belgian and American flags much larger than themselves mingled among the crowd.

As the hour of five approached, the tenseness of those in the crowd grew more and more pronounced; while the reporters anxiously awaited the return of young M——, half fearing to dread his reply. All of a sudden

down the lane from the direction of the main highway came the loud reverberation of a klaxon, and amid a cloud of sand and dust a large army car approached. The police lines were drawn tighter and the Constabulary prepared to salute.

Inside the car, the clean-cut features of a well-known gentleman, dressed in a frock-coat and top hat, were noticeable. Two young men in full military regalia were seated beside him. For a moment we were all guessing who it might be and then some school boys burst forth:

"Gee, it's Black Jack, wearing a stove-pipe."

And General Pershing laughed good-naturedly and waved his hand at them.

The car stopped at the gateway while the General had his passes examined and then proceeded slowly up the driveway. On the right-hand running board, quite unnoticed except to a few of the more observant, there crouched a reporter, quick enough to grasp his only chance of entry into the carefully guarded grounds.

For the next half-hour after car drew up at the gateway, produced its pass and slowly

entered the grounds of Peacock Point. Gayly gowned ladies with young and demure daughters, handsomely clothed men and much be-decorated officials, passed down the lane, while tired, weary newspapermen resigned to the fate of copying down the names of those who bore that important pass, remained outside.

Q—— M——, after many endeavors, returned with the information that the nearest person to the owner of the residence with whom he could get in contact, was a very distant secretary, who had been too scared to say anything except that he couldn't talk with the press.

But we were not to be turned down without one last valiant effort. F—— B——, of the *New York World*, the best known "sleuth" of the "jolly roysters," had conceived a plan. He had come to Peacock Point in his speedster, parked within a quarter of a mile of the gateway so that he was quite certain the police force had not seen it.

Ten minutes later he entered his machine, covered his head with an army skull cap such as aviators and motorcyclists use in racing, and

placed beside him, and in the bottom of his car at full length, a few of his compatriots.

Just as we were ready to make a dash for it, a lot of horns commenced blowing from the direction of the mainroad, and four cars dashed by our hiding place. In less time than it takes to write this we had joined ourselves to the little group of vehicles.

The first contained the Queen of the Belgians, the little Prince, Countess Gaislaine de Caraman-Chimay, the lady-in-waiting to the Queen, and Mrs. August Belmont, who was a member of Mayor Hylan's Committee of Welcome, assigned to follow the Queen wherever she went. The other cars were filled with members of the staff accompanying the royal foreigners and secret service men. We formed the rear.

As the Queen's car entered the gateway, all the school children set up a loud cheer, waved their flags, and threw flowers to the little Prince. The villagers and "excitement fans" cheered, and somewhere within the grounds a band began playing *Brabanconne* (the Belgian National Anthem). No passes were demanded and by a sheer piece of luck seven newspaper-

men passed into the grounds from which they should have been excluded.

Mr. and Mrs. Davison and their two sons and daughters greeted the royal party at the doorway of their summer home, while an aisle was formed by debutantes in Red Cross costume and young College boys in khaki leading into the house. After a few words of thanks the Queen entered and seated herself at the tea table with Mrs. Davison.

We reporters, still excluded from the inside of the house into which we dared not enter for fear of being detected, peered through the windows and gathered mental notes. We saw Dr. Livingston Farrand of the American Red Cross present a medal to the Queen eulogizing her for her distinguished services to the wounded in war time.

We heard Mr. Davison speaking for the Red Cross from a printed document which our office had received four days previous.

"Belgium's resistance to the enemy maintained the proud national tradition which has descended from the days of Cæsar, who recorded that of all nations the Belgians are the bravest," said the master of Peacock Point. "It was this spirit that checked an enemy of

overwhelming numbers and impeded his progress until Belgium's allies could make hurried preparations to avoid immediate disaster and begin the long struggle which ultimately turned threatened defeat into glorious victory."

The Queen, probably the most charming of the reigning monarch's wives in Europe, arose to reply:

"I am deeply touched by the greeting prepared for me by the American Red Cross. It is impossible to put into words the gratitude that we feel in Belgium toward your society, and I think it a great privilege to have the opportunity to-day to express to you my thanks."

There was much dignified clapping and the reporters were obliged to withdraw lest they be seen looking too intensely through the windows.

Later, the distinguished guests assembled on the piazza overlooking the blue waters of Long Island Sound. It was a beautiful sunset that we witnessed on that memorable afternoon. The gracefully sloping meadows had never appeared more green, the large oaks and maples never more inviting, and the Sound never as quiet and peaceful looking.

As I watched the distinguished personages,

I thought of two years before. I painted in my mind in still more glowing colors that which the sight before me now brought back. I wished for the moment that I might be given the power to paint as rapidly and as colorfully the visions which were growing in my mind's eye.

There sat General John J. Pershing, commander in chief of the American Expeditionary Forces in Europe. Two years before, almost to a day, he had completed the most wonderful attack made by any of the allies in France. Two years almost to a day the American army had forged its way through Chateau Thierry and had plowed its path into German occupied regions.

And close beside him Ambassador Jean Adrien Antoine Jusserand, representing the French republic in America. What France had endured for five weary years, what she was still enduring in the days of reconstruction, what she would endure for years to come seemed stamped upon the features of this remarkable representative of our sister nation.

General Hugh Keppell Bethel, military attaché of the British Embassy in Washington, one of the youngest—he was only thirty-eight

—officials representing any branch of foreign service, who two years before, when commanding the 66th division of the 4th British Army in Belgium, had won four decorations for bravery, was gazing into the distance as though he, too, was thinking of the days that had gone before, and the changes they had wrought in his life.

And then Mrs. Davison with her husband close at hand; the great white banner, from which shone the flaming cross, the emblem that mothers, sisters, wives, and sweethearts worshipped and loved; the emblem which saved from peril and danger the lives of millions of those who had enlisted for the cause.

The Queen of the Belgians, and the little Prince, what thoughts were theirs this beautiful Autumn afternoon? It was from them that the world had learned to labor and to be glad when the cause of justice was won.

At the end of the little group sat a famous civilian soldier. Through life and death the 27th division in America had obeyed the commands of Major General O’Ryan. For four years the British, the Belgian, the French and the Portuguese had tried to wedge their way through the impregnable Hindenberg line; for four long years they had been repulsed until

the time when the New York Volunteers approached and found that the Line had become a line indeed, for cement foundations, iron girders, and the staunchest materials in the world had been embedded in its foundations. Four hours after the famous Twenty-Seventh had taken up post in its area, the Line was but a memory of other days and the Stars and Stripes flew from every post along the former Double-Eagle embankment.

"The national spirit of Belgium is typified and personified in the persons of your majesties, whose example to our own country has stimulated courage, endurance and sacrifice in all who unfeignedly love the cause of freedom," said General O'Ryan in modulated tones, as he too gazed into the distance.

"In the qualities manifested by your majesties the Red Cross discerns the spirit of service and sacrifice of the American people, who made their Red Cross an instrument through which they might express in tangible form and by restorative acts their sympathy for their suffering associates and allies, and their unfaltering determination to spare no effort or sacrifice until the war should be won," spoke Mr. Davison, slowly and in clear-cut tones.

General Bethel, as though brought back to the present with great effort, added: "I am sure that among the proudest privileges of my compatriots was that of taking the American people's message direct to the sacred soil of Belgium and to its distressed but unconquerable people."

For a few moments no one said anything, and then General Pershing spoke:

"May we express to your majesties our national admiration for yourselves, our hopes for long and prosperous lives to you both, and our will that from the crimson fields of war there shall have sprung a mutual understanding and a bond of friendship between the two nations which shall outlast all the mutations of time."

At this moment Brigadier General George R. Dyer asked the Queen if she would honor the American Red Cross by joining. He explained that its third Roll Call for members was about to begin. Her Majesty accepted the honor and gave General Dyer a silver dollar. General Pershing was the next to sign the Roll, and the Queen laughed as she shook hands with him, reminding him that this was the first time she had ever seen him in civilians.

"Is it not true," said the Queen in a beautiful English voice, "that the only men who are always prepared for all emergencies are those who never allow their efforts to be interrupted?"

"May I be allowed to say that I shall follow the development of your work with keenest interest and sympathy."

She turned and, holding out her hand, said good-bye to those who had entertained and received her during the afternoon. Then Countess Gaislaine de Caraman-Chimay accompanied her to her automobile, and as distant music played the Star-Spangled Banner, the Queen of the Belgians drove away.

We hastened to our car and sped off for New York, making sure this time, however, that we did not include ourselves in the royal party.

Upon reaching the city I hastened over to the office of the paper I represented and wrote out my story of the day's events. I was so imbued with the wonderful sight I had witnessed on the piazza overlooking the Sound, and the glowing conversations I had recorded there, that I did not pay enough attention to the news value of the story.

That evening upon reaching home the tele-

phone recalled me hastily to the office. The Night City Desk was in a rage concerning the material which the writer had handed in.

"Wot d'ya think we sent y'on?" I was asked. "We don't want a bed around the roses. We want frank, free facts. Hustle about it now and give us the dope!"

Quite tired out and with many misgivings I sat down and tried to write the events of the day in the purely cut and dried vernacular. When the story was completed—and I still have it in my scrap book—it was three columns in length and led the front page spread, but what a different story from the one in which the spirit had moved me.

To this day, the lesson which the writer learned that evening has remained a fixture in his mind. In purely news material the greatest lesson to be pounded into the beginner is: "Stick to facts, describe what, when and where it happened, and let the editorial writer give his impressions of how and why the thing occurred."

CHAPTER IX

REPORTING RIOTS

I WAS coming up Park Avenue late one evening, when I heard a shot fired, and saw a lot of people running down one of the side streets toward Lexington Avenue. It had been my day off, and having spent it in the country, I had not kept in touch with the news.

Before I could stop my car to find out what the trouble was about, I saw a lot of mounted policemen charging down Park Avenue, swinging their clubs with great dexterity. Still unaware of what was going on I put on speed, ducked down below the cowl, and sped past them just in time to avoid some nasty bruises from their swinging clubs.

A few streets beyond I stopped the car and inquired of passers-by what the trouble was about. The Longshoremen's strike was still in progress on the waterfront, and machine guns kept the streets clear down there, so it could not have been the boatmen who

were causing this trouble. I was informed that an alien company was attempting to hold German Opera in the Lexington Avenue Opera House, and that former service men from all sections of the city opposed it.

On reaching home that evening a hurried telephone call awaited me, ordering me to report to the newspapermen who covered that district for the *Herald*, as soon as I could get there. This time I left the car behind, and with some difficulty finally managed to push my way through the crowds and into the 51st Street Police Station.

A short time later, armed with instructions and with my press card on the front of my hat, I set forth to reconnoiter the scene and endeavor to pick up a story here and there. Aside from the fact that there was a large crowd of reserves and regulars, I could find nothing of interest within the police lines. In one of the side streets some fifteen mounted men were kept waiting, and in another a dozen or so motorcycle riders. The main body of reserves called from four other stations were held in the rear of the police station until such time as they might be needed.

The mob was divided in two of the side

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streets just west of the Opera House, with overflow gatherings on Lexington Avenue above 53rd Street. Most of the men were in uniform, and those that were not wore varied assortments of service buttons, medals and ribbons. There was very little sign of violence, and not much unrest. The truth, as it seemed to me, was that they had no one to lead them, and were waiting for some one to rise and take command.

Occasional hoots and muttered oaths were all the excitement of the evening, with a few charges by the mounted men when the crowds pressed too close to the lines.

The next day all the papers in and near the city ran "spread" headlines condemning German opera while we were still technically at war with that nation. In their editorial columns they upheld the men who had the courage and determination to prevent German opera at this time. They urged the service men to continue, not by the use of force, but in the courts, so that the Germans should be kept in the place in which they still belonged. One group of citizens tried to bring an injunction, in order to quell the possible terror which might rage in

New York if the service men and the opera house employees ever came to blows.

But that evening it was announced that German Opera would continue just the same. It continued, but it was a great deal different to what the managers had thought it would be; and had it not been for New York's police force, I sincerely doubt whether there would be any more Germans on the New York stage. But the police, under orders from their chief and Mayor Hylan, proceeded to double their guard around the Opera House.

As early as seven o'clock the crowds began to assemble, and by eight-thirty, the opening time, probably 7,000 people were in the streets. This time instead of a quiet, dignified gathering, there were assembled some of the "leather-lunged" lads of the A.E.F. Almost every one was in uniform, soldiers, sailors and marines, with a goodly scattering of officers from all branches of the service.

It was along toward ten o'clock when the mob started action, and a concentrated attack took place. Fiftieth Street was the scene of the attack, but owing to the numbers of detectives in the crowd all news of the advance reached the 51st Street station before

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it had begun. This gave the mounted men time to order the crowds back, and when they did not obey to charge them with their clubs.

Many ambulances were upon the scene, and numerous were the times when they were used, although there were but few serious casualties. Minor cuts and bruises were treated by First Aid Dressing stations erected in the cellars of nearby residences, and attended by volunteer nurses with wartime records.

Just before the opera was over that evening a mass attack was staged at the same time from six directions. This gave the police a great deal of work, and their efforts were not in vain, for only eleven men penetrated within the lines. They were arrested and locked up for the night.

The crowd, driven back almost half-way up the streets from which they had emerged, charged again and again, but to no effect. One group, however, in the West 52nd Street direction managed to get through the lines by hiding in alleyways until the main body of the police advance had passed, and then escaping, formed a huge cordon and rushed down upon the Opera House. Somebody saw them coming, just in time to avoid a calamity,

for the German players and the motorcycle riders, swinging night sticks with much precision, speeded up Lexington Avenue. The cracks which some service-men undoubtedly received could be heard some distance away, and many of their comrades came from all directions to aid them. But as each group advanced so did the police, so that very soon the entire party of ex-service-men was driven back to Park Avenue.

Inside the opera, all was in a state of uproar. Hisses from the galleries, stray eggs and cabbages, odoriferous bombs and sneezing powder made a most unpleasant evening for those who attended. Toward the close of the performance a soldier in civilians arose and commenced tearing the German flag off the stage. A host of angry Huns grabbed him and tossed him into the music pit, where he landed on the base-drum, not so much injuring himself as the instrument. He was later arrested and charged with disorderly conduct, but was out of the police station on the bail of a hundred men in the mob.

The following morning, hot with rage, 2,500 service men presented themselves at City Hall and requested the Mayor to stop the

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opera. The Mayor refused to see them, and claimed that freedom of speech was allowed in America, and that he could do nothing.

During the afternoon posts of the American Legion met everywhere and plans were formulated. If the Mayor and police would not stop the opera, the service men swore they would. And great was the battle waged that night to carry out the threat.

On the morning of the fourth day, the Star Opera Company, which was presenting the opera, issued a statement denying that German Opera would be suspended and declaring that the directors had resolved to continue with the production of the announced program "as long as it could be produced on a legal basis, and as long as the right of production of opera in German was upheld by the courts and protected by the authorities against maniacs."

Had it not been for this last word it is doubtful whether the mobs would have paid much attention to the declaration. But the word "maniacs" was enough to excite the calmest imaginations. War was declared by those who had fought for America, against a foe thus protected.

A revival of Weber's "Freischutz" was

scheduled to take place that evening, and, it was signified, would be repeated for the next two nights in succession. Even the program was glaring in its make-up. It stated that the "maniacs" who tried to break up the opera would receive their just rewards from the police department, and went on to add that Germans had never been beaten and were still the superior race of the world.

"The inclination of the good American public to support German opera was clearly shown by the capacity audience on the opening night," was one of the statements in the program. "Only brute force can stop the music-loving and peaceful public of this city from supporting the revival of German opera at a time when trade relations are being resumed by most of our allies with Germany, and the sun of peace and freedom shines over the world."

Many posts of the Legion and Foreign Wars decided then that peace and freedom, which the Germans so loved, would shine over their heads 'ere many hours went by, and furthermore they decreed that brute force would "do the trick."

During the early afternoon H—— P——, one of the ablest reporters in New York jour-

nalism to-day, and the writer, went over the entire scene of the recent rioting. We clambered up rickety fire-escapes, peeped down cob-webbed chimneys, examined alleyways and backyards, shoved our way into tenements and imposing apartments, nosed around in subway stations and elevated entrances, and finally sought Inspector U——, who had been placed in charge of all the police defenses. The Inspector, a clever, intense man, warned us not to expose ourselves too much, even though in quest of news, for his men would be armed with riot guns and ammunition, and the order would be "shoot to kill." He said the New York Police Department would take no chances with an angry, revengeful mob, and that in order to carry out the wishes of the authorities and preserve order every precaution would be taken. Armed reserves would be stationed on all nearby roofs, and as most of the buildings were no higher than six floors this would make guarding from above a great deal more simple. He told us that approximately 1,200 men would be at his command, and that he believed they would be sufficient to suppress all trouble instigated by the ex-service men.

At four o'clock in the afternoon the police lines were drawn up, making a complete circuit of the entire vicinity, with patrolmen at intervals of twenty feet. A detachment of twenty-five mounted men was held at the Precinct Station, with twenty-five more in the fire-house on the block below. Ten motorcycle riders and four hundred patrolmen were kept at the 51st Street Station. Reserves in small groups of eight or ten were stationed in the apartment houses on Park Avenue for two blocks in each direction, as well as in the tenement houses on the further east side. Ten patrolmen were in the subway station and an equal number at the elevated entrance.

Newspapermen, and there were fifty-eight of them, had commandeered a cigar store on the corner of Lexington Avenue and 51st Street, less than fifty feet from the Opera House entrance, and right beside the subway and police station. This was the only place in the vicinity where there were two telephone booths. One enterprising paper had installed a direct wire to its office, while another employed the Postal Telegraph Station three doors away and sent direct messages to the office. In our wanderings during the afternoon

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we had found a telephone in one of the houses opposite the Opera House entrance, and here we took up the *Herald* headquarters.

Besides the district man we had another reporter from the office, while Mr. P—— carried on the rewrite work and picturesque features of the story.

At six-thirty I decided to get a bite to eat, and as very few persons had shown up I scurried down Lexington Avenue to 49th Street. Hardly had I entered the little restaurant than I heard much muffled tramping. Gazing out of the door I saw one of the strangest parades I had even seen.

A mass of all sorts of outfits, in close column of fours, the military formation so familiar a few years ago, moved through the darkened streets. They were marching west toward Park Avenue, and were but a few hundred strong. Ahead of them they carried the flag, and right down their center a long draped affair, which first looked like a flag-pole torn from its roots and placed between the men. Later I discovered this to be a sort of "battering-ram," the device used by the ancient Romans to tear down the walls of a city which they attacked.

The companies passed the little restaurant door, and when I inquired from whence they came, the only reply I received was, "From the Gold Star Mothers of New York."

Park Avenue resembled war-time days rather than the peaceful section of town that it really is. Several hundreds, so it seemed to the writer, were marching into place on this great thoroughfare, and not one single policeman had appeared in sight. Not only foot soldiers, but motorcycles, a few armored cars, and a great gathering of trucks.

Madison Avenue, a good block away, was jammed with reserves, but reserves of the A.E.F., and not of the *Home Guard*! All the side streets began to fill up, and many on-lookers appeared in nearby windows. What was about to take place? And why this ghastly stillness? It was as though the orders which held sway twelve months before still had the same effect, and silence was being maintained by some supreme order. But more than that it signified that the World War veterans meant business.

I had a strong sympathy for those men, who had but one thing in mind, that of crushing for evermore German insolence of this kind.

At eight o'clock the first sign of violence occurred. As if by clockwork the entire dim mass on Park Avenue, Madison Avenue and all of the side streets, commenced to move, slowly at first and then with a vigor and action which indicated that something was about to occur. At the same time a rumbled muttering could be heard beneath the ground, followed in quick succession by a blast of police whistles, emanating from the subway and elevated stations.

In less time than it takes to tell, dozens of reserves were rushed in both directions, and then the fun began. A long line of figures began climbing down the elevated scaffolding on Third Avenue, while the same number attempted to emerge from the underground stations. In consequence the side streets were filled and a charge of a terrific nature took place, followed by another and another. The police lines were swept back, bit by bit, in all directions, and it began to look as though the singers in the Opera House had better be getting out, for their lives would not be worth much once the service men got inside the house.

Some of the audience evidently fearing this started to leave, but upon reaching the

street found they could get nowhere. One elderly woman shrieked and fainted. This was the sign for a general exodus. The service men, on seeing their prey so close at hand, growled and yelled tauntingly. It was as though they were at the Zoo, but the police bars held staunch and did not give.

Firemen stationed in alleyways along the side streets, once the crowds had passed them, assumed their post, and at a given signal from the police department opened fire on the service men with drenching streams of water. The lines of the bold offensive crumpled and withdrew, but not without a threat of revenge for every man who held the hose, and a few seconds later a wild scene occurred. Bricks and mortar tore through the air, rancid eggs and putrid butter descended upon the heads of the authorities, and shoes and hammers made life quite exciting. Newspapermen who had been standing in that region shinnied up lamp posts or dove down holes in the sidewalk.

And not to be outdone by the authorities, as soon as the "barrage" had cleared, the motor trucks filled with armed men, motorcycles and

armored cars tore up and down Lexington Avenue striking at everything in sight. Not a person was on the streets except a few who had been knocked down by flying missiles; but none of the automotive vehicles dared stop for they knew full well the penalty awaiting them.

One large truck overturned while attempting to cut around the corner and the driver was badly injured, though miraculously enough the entire twenty men within escaped with but minor bruises.

Late in the evening when turmoil reigned supreme the writer, accompanied by a man from the *Morning Telegraph*, went up to the rooftops for a new angle to our stories. We had just finished talking to the patrolman armed with a riot gun, who occasionally fired blank cartridges above the mob, when we heard a nasty oath somewhere out of the darkness. We were standing on the rickety fire-escape over an alleyway, and a whirring sound passed our heads. I dodged just in time, but my unfortunate companion received the brick full force and was cared for at a nearby hospital.

Just before the opera closed all the street lights went out, and in our attempt to find our way across the street, we were apparently

warned just in time, for a fireman's hose was turned full force on the reporters' rest house. I jumped down a short cellarway and avoided a drenching, but some of my companions were not so fortunate.

The following morning the Star Opera Company announced that owing to the resignation of its acting manager, it, would be obliged to suspend future performances. We wondered if there was not more significance in the flag which won the war than in the resignation of an acting manager.

CHAPTER X

A SOLDIER OF FREEDOM

COLONEL ARTHUR LYNCH, that famous and pugnacious Australian-Irishman, visited the United States in the fall of 1919 with a plan for the settlement of the troubles in Ireland. He remained in this country several weeks lecturing extensively, but returned to Ireland without the aid which he believed he would be able to secure.

His declarations to the press were numerous, and I may freely say that they were often misquoted; so much so in fact that the *Herald* agreed that they would print one, with his sanction, that should be a correct version of all he wanted to tell the people. And it was in this way that the author was given an opportunity of meeting the famous soldier of fortune and of freedom.

Gramercy Park, that section of New York still the home of many distinguished old families, lies to-day in the heart of a large

wholesale cotton district, bordering the tenement houses of the lower East Side, and the street markets of Spanish and Italian merchants. Gigantic skyscrapers tower aloft, but the trees and shrubs enclosed by an iron railing seem to thrive much in the same manner as they did in the days of our grand-sires.

The National Arts Club, the meeting place of a majority of talented foreigners who visit New York, lies encompassed between a former livery stable and a publishing house at the lower end of the park, and it was here, amid surroundings hundreds of years old, that Colonel Lynch asked me to meet him.

Promptly at nine-thirty that evening I presented myself at the doorway of the Club, and a few moments later was ensconced in a deep, damask chair, listening to the tales of exciting adventure that Colonel Lynch can so admirably describe.

Born in Smythesdale, Australia, the son of a civil engineer of some distinction, he was educated in many countries, with medicine as his future. His schooling took him first to Ballarat, then for years to the University of Melbourne, and later to Berlin. Medicine he

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studied at Beaujon in Paris, and St. Mary's Hospital in London.

His diplomas would place him in line with the foremost educators of the world, for at one time or another he received a Master of Arts, a Doctor of Medicine, the graduation card from the renowned Ecole Superieure de l'Electricité, in Paris; and the Doctor of Advanced Medicine, from Berlin University. He is a member of the French Society of Physics, the International Society of Engineers, the London Mathematical Society, the Aristotelian Society and many other scientific and literary bodies.

In the field of journalism I learned that he had written for most of the London and Paris dailies and for many magazines in the United States. His ready pen has added much to the worth-while literature of our time, and in all his books there is a touch of the philosophic. "A Koran of Love," "A New System," and "Purpose and Evolution" are among his best known works; and he has also published in French and German.

In 1895 Colonel Lynch married the daughter of the Rev. John D. Powell, and a few years later he placed his name among those

of international celebrities; for it was in 1900 that he formed an Irish brigade in Johannesburg, South Africa, and with the Boers fought the British. For this he was convicted of high treason and imprisoned eleven months in England, but was released by special writ from King Edward.

Two months out of prison he was elected Member of Parliament for Galway, and served in this capacity for four years, much to the anger of many Britishers. He then returned to civil life, but his constituents would not allow him to remain long in idleness, and in 1909 he was again elected to Parliament, this time from the county of West Clare. During his term he was an ardent supporter of the Home Rule bills, and in later years favored some of the measures of the Sinn Feiners.

In 1914 he received his Colonelcy in the British Army, and was in charge of one of the Irish brigades which fought intact in France. In July, 1918, he requested the late Colonel Roosevelt to send a message of encouragement to the Irish people, believing it might prove a stimulant for recruiting, but although Roosevelt displayed deep interest in the proposal he declared that as the United States was also at

war he could make no formal comment. Col. Lynch, however, retained the distinction of having served as Colonel in two wars, in both of which he commanded Irish troops.

"It gives me a peculiar delight to come to America," Colonel Lynch was saying, after we had discussed some of the episodes of his earlier life, "and as I came up New York harbor the other day it thrilled me to see that splendid flag of yours, for I knew that for once in my life I had reached a country where democracy prevailed and where royalty, past or present, did not have much effect upon the great majority of the people. Your Statue of Liberty, with the miraculous city behind it, is an angel of mercy to the seafarer who comes in from that troublesome pond that lies between America and Ireland. As an ocean, I am not fond of the Atlantic. It is not such a genial, honest ocean as the Pacific; it does not waft the sweet perfumes of the Indian; it is not interesting like the Mediterranean; in my estimation it is a "mugwump" ocean. However, the boat on which I was a passenger is a fine seaworthy vessel, and I believe I enjoyed as fine a passage as I could expect at this time of year."

His blue eyes shone brightly as he talked, and emanated a warmth and understanding seldom appreciated in the "interviewed" natures of most men with whom a reporter comes in contact. His clear, quiet expressions emphasized everything that he said, and his varied life lent color to his background. The coming to America of this distinguished gentleman meant more than the casual visit of a lecturer. Many of Ireland's sons had awaited his arrival with breathless anxiety; not a few Americans wished to know how the century-old dispute could be settled, and for a man who was on record as a champion of liberty to present a solution was evidence enough of his sincere interest in the freedom of Ireland.

"You have asked me," he continued, "for the reason for which I really came to your country; and you have requested me to tell you unhesitatingly my ideas of the cure for the cause which I represent. I shall endeavor to state briefly to the American public that which I preach in my lectures all over the civilized world.

"I didn't come to talk against the British,

for although pro-Irish, I am not anti-British. I admire the British people and their ideas, but I am not in favor with the British administration. At present I am out of Parliament, and no longer connected with the army, so I have no party to serve, except to verify or discredit the things that I hear.

"I come therefore to your shores as a merchant of ideas. I come with a solvent of the Irish question. As a member of the British labor party, I have faith in the future labor policies of the British Empire. I am therefore not only carrying out my own policy, but also as a part of a great democratic policy, am seeing justice done to Ireland. And that is in fact one of the reasons why I could not accept the entire policy of the Sinn Feiners.

"The tactical mistake of the Sinn Feiners is that they threw away a powerful weapon when they refused to come to Westminster; but also from a point of view of propaganda they neglected what was the sounding board for the greatest magnification of expression of opinion in the entire world. They made a mistake in not recognizing the full power of the labor movement, and they forsook any chance of using it.

"The Sinn Feiners so far have done marvels, and they have consolidated their move to an extent beyond the hopes of many of their friends, certainly far beyond the anticipations of their enemies; yet, I do not see how they can win out. However, I believe that their program might be carried out, and if brought to a reality made practicable through certain modifications of ways and means; for I fear greatly that Sinn Feiners will not get through, at present, with the tactics they employ.

"The people of the United States cannot form an idea of how suppressive the Irish form of government is, for the British Government is not only very tyrannical, but absurdly so. Organization has been suppressed by the Government, and all athletic or labor assemblies have been suspended. The public playing of football or handball, unless under the auspices of the police, is prohibited. The British fear that people will congregate and exchange ideas. It is a crime which constitutes conspiracy for more than four persons to assemble more than five minutes at a street corner or public crossing.

"Ireland is the last buttress in Europe

against the spread of ideas, but there are Sinn Feiners in Ireland angry enough to do anything by force. However, trouble is arising when we find by official figures that eighty per cent of all those who constitute or instigate the workings of a strike in a foreign country are Irish by birth; this demonstrates that since they cannot succeed at home they are trying elsewhere.

"World republicanism must come, and I shall continue to fight for it wherever I happen to be, and I intend to devote the rest of my life toward the cause of the freedom of the world. When it comes it is sure to be universal. I have talked with soldiers of all the allied armies and their sentiments are overwhelmingly against a continuation of the ridiculous system of rule by kings.

"My plan for the eventual solution of the Irish question is that the British world should be made familiar with democratic ideals and should proceed as rapidly as possible to establish a republic in Ireland, and even in England, herself. If not, the laboring classes will take drastic means.

"Whatever be the right or wrong of my

policy, the English Government would never dream of granting that demand, except through sheer physical force; and no physical force large enough exists in Ireland. Nevertheless, if Sinn Feiners were able to carry out to the full extent their policy they could claim they had forced the British Government to a condition in which it was prepared to offer a far greater scheme of home rule than it had hitherto contemplated, namely, dominion home rule.

"This is but a stepping stone to the final settlement, and the latter will come when the dominions themselves work out their natural evolution and become republics. Let me add that the time is coming, possibly within five years, when the English empire shall be disrupted from within unless she ceases giving her lavish nobility such rights as her common citizens are not allowed to look upon."

On October 26th we published Colonel Lynch's remarkable interview; a few days later I met him on the street. He thanked me for the story, and told me that he was off for Canada that evening, and would preach his doctrine there; but the following day it was reported that he had been detained upon arriv-

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ing in Montreal. For a long time I heard nothing of the great soldier, then one day several weeks later I read that he had been arrested in West Clare county, a Sinn Fein stronghold, for seditious utterances. He was freed again, and a short time ago sprang into the columns of the British press as opposed to the recent policy of Lloyd George. What will be his final fate no one knows, but his courage and his sagacity are such that they inspire rather than deteriorate the purpose of any one possessed of a fiery temperament and bent upon doing his best for humanity.

CHAPTER XI

SMALL FRY

IN all large newspaper organizations there are certain men trained in particular branches of work, just as there were men trained for each branch of the army during the war, so that whenever a story of especial merit occurs there is a man versed in its sphere who can be sent out to get the details. These men, the most efficient in their various capacities, are assigned to different departments, and in many offices to different rooms. In most cases the trained advocates usually belong to Crime, Politics, Finance, Dramatics, Art, Sports, Society, Education, and Shipping.

The main offices of a metropolitan newspaper are occupied by the general duty men, whose business it is to "cover" all the general news not specialized by the departmental men, and this includes dinners, banquets, church meetings, raids, accidents, minor fires and burglaries, romances, scandals, boards of trade,

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lost children and relatives, financial drives and parades. The term usually used for the latter, by the general duty reporters, is "small fry," for seldom are any of these things given over a paragraph display, and often they are not recorded at all.

Occasionally, however, one picks up interesting squibs of news in this manner, and when this is so "small fry" occupies a large space on one of the leading pages, or may even shove itself into a "box," the term applied to the paragraphs enclosed in a black-lined square at the top of the front page. It is then that the heart of a promising young newspaperman takes a great jump, for as this occurrence seldom happens it is a red-letter day in his life.

Most of the precinct fire houses and police stations in the larger cities are occupied by newspapermen from almost every paper in the city. The duties of these district men are few and far between, and many of them are engaged in other occupations, but should an alarm, requiring a policeman or a fire-engine to leave the station, be sounded, the district man must follow it to its end. If, however, the occurrence is worthy of three alarms, usu-

ally a "small fry" man is sent from the main office as well.

Many are the times that the author has hastened from a warm, comfortable office out into the damp, chilly midnight air, to run down a thief, or watch gleaming flames lick up the sides of a rusticated mansion. One evening a triple alarm had sounded from the theatrical district, and the author had been dispatched to discover its cause. On Forty-Second Street, east of Broadway and west of Sixth Avenue, the Bush Terminal Office Buildings presented a wonderful sight, with angry flames curling up their walls. A tremendous crowd had assembled at the Broadway intersection, and it took several minutes to fight one's way through them and into the guarded arena beyond which no one, unless he possessed a police or press pass, could enter.

For a long time I contented myself with standing in a group of almost a half-hundred newspapermen who had sprung from nowhere, and then the idea occurred of finding out how much damage had been done and how it started, for the fire did not seem lower than the sixth floor. Four other reporters joined me, and we

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made our way through a mass of broken glass to the elevator shaft beneath the great building. The elevators were still running, although much water was trickling down the shafts from above, and we placed ourselves in one of them with several firemen. At the fifth floor we were told to get out, for something had happened to the mechanism of the lift; none of us needed a second bidding. All the lights were out, but flashlights aided our progress and revealed that the ceilings of these offices were still intact, although water was seeping through cracks at different intervals; we judged by this that the fire had made its way upward and that only water was coming down.

A fireman, who was putting on one of his rubber boots, volunteered the information that there was a stairway to the street, two doors to the rear; and, upon further questioning, told us that the fire had damaged a great collection of goods belonging to the ruler of Persia. From scattered bits of information which I gained from various employees during that evening it developed that these goods, chiefly rugs and precious stones, had been sent from Persia to the exhibition in San Francisco. Upon examining records of this exhibit I found

that they were valued at close to \$2,000,000. I then learned that over half the collection had been destroyed by the fire.

Further questioning revealed that the fire had started by means of the candles and kerosene lamps which were being used in order to economize on fuel. This was the second portion of the story which made interesting reading, and when I reached the street I overheard the third paragraph of my tale. An elderly woman who was being helped into an ambulance was telling a police official that she had counted 200 people who left the building less than four minutes after the first alarm had been sounded.

Raids often prove as exciting as spectacular fires, and many times I have waited with beating heart while the detectives slowly pounced upon their prey. I remember especially one night in the dead of winter when a famous gambling den was raided. Several patrolmen and plain-clothes men were stationed at every exit of the building, while four reporters were hidden in an alleyway opposite. At a given signal the doorbell was rung and a detective, dressed in the fashion of those who

played there, asked to be admitted. The door opened silently, and the officer entered. For a long time everything was silent, and then we heard a shot and saw the lights go out. Confusion reigned supreme for a few minutes, and the entire thoroughfare bristled with blue-coats; then the lights came on again and a police wagon drew up in front of the door. Eight or nine men were led into it, and the reporters climbed on the rear. At the police station the fictitious names of those seized were recorded upon the blotters. Of the nine men whose names were being registered I recognized four, and they were all prominent in the amateur sporting world. The following morning we were the only paper in town to record the correct names of those who had been arrested the night before.

I never knew until I had been on the staff of the *Herald* several months how many different organizations existed in the city of New York, and I would doubtless have never known this if it had not been that for weeks I had been assigned to dinners, lunches and banquets. The night life of the "maître d'hôtel" in any of our large hostelries must

be a phantasmagoria of sensations, so much so that I should not wonder if he were driven insane long before his contract had elapsed. For seldom do hotels of the size of the Waldorf Astoria, the Commodore, the Astor, the Pennsylvania or the Biltmore pass by a single day without at least four or five large organizations meeting there for a luncheon or dinner. The reporter who handles such material soon becomes as disgusted as the waiter who serves each new, expectant diner.

Oscar, for many years head waiter of the Waldorf Astoria, was retired recently with a goodly pension, for during the twenty or more years in which he occupied a leading position in that famous hotel, he seldom missed a day or night's service. Oscar was the friend of all reporters, and seldom did a few hours pass that he was not imparting news of especial importance to the outposts of the press.

Night after night, with four or more "small fry" assignments on my pad, I used to call up the "maîtres d'hôtel" of the numerous places to which I had been assigned to find out which assignment was the most important. And night after night I have "covered" perfume

manufacturers, cotton merchants, secret societies, or a college class, silk association, Americanization association, humanitarian or alumni association, merchant association, grave diggers' union, masonic, Salvation Army, clothing workers, farm magazine association, political birthday, army and relief fund dinners.

Sometimes the press had tables reserved for them, often beneath the speaker's table; at others there would be no accommodations whatever, but men were stationed at the door with printed copies of the speeches to be made, and the reporter would need but a few moments to collect this data. Occasionally there would be no reservations and no printed matter, and yet some important dignitary scheduled to speak; and this was the kind of assignment we detested, for it meant hours of waiting in the galleries above the dining halls, with poor acoustics, trying to get the master words that the speaker of the evening was about to deliver. Once during a function of some sort or other the speech of the evening was read from a pamphlet which proved to be forty printed pages in length. It was an important declaration from the Wheat Growers'

Association and we needed at least five hundred words from it, but it was close on to the time when our first edition went to press before I could make head or tail out of the long, weighty discussion which was being made.

Accidents, unless of great importance, are seldom recorded by the New York press, yet should a prominent person be hurt or any one killed their names are always mentioned. Outsiders think that every time a taxicab rams another one, or a street car jumps the track, or the glass is smashed in a subway window, that a reporter will appear upon the scene, secure all names, and next morning the entire story flash before the public. This is not true. Minor accidents happen every minute all over the great city and are never recorded in any of the morning's papers; usually the policeman of the district brings his tale before the lieutenant commanding his post and the notation is entered upon the "blotter," the term applied by the press to the police-recording ledger. Sometimes a city news reporter is sent out to view the scene of trouble, and if he thinks it worthy of mention it is given a few lines on the ticker, which repeats mechanically in every newspaper office at once.

There is a young man now on the staff of a New York paper who was exceedingly anxious to be affiliated with that organization, but who, through inexperience, was not able to secure a position. He was told, however, that should he succeed in distinguishing himself in any striking manner he would be placed on the staff. At this time he was a student at a school of journalism in the city, and one evening while traveling down-town in the elevated shortly before midnight, was pinned under the wheels of the car in which he was traveling during a terrific collision. When he extricated himself he made for the nearest telephone and gave the deserving paper the entire story of the wreck, continuing to do so until daylight. The following morning this paper "scooped" all others on its first edition and presented a more complete story in its later editions than any of its competitors.

Lost relatives are another source of ennui to the daily press, and they were especially so to the *Herald*, for its circulation and prestige were often thought to be a medium for finding those who had strayed from home. Periodically, once or twice a week, sad citizens would ask that a reporter be sent to them, and when the

ill-fated young man appeared would burst into tears, revealing to him the absence of a dear one. The tale of woe would be long and heart-rending, accompanied by photographs and directions by which the tardy one might be found. The author very often was inclined to believe that although presumably lost, the husband or wife was in reality seeking a quiet change of surroundings.

The publishing of a newspaper is considered by authorities merely another form of private business, so that libel is consequently a tremendous offense, and reporters sent to investigate a scandal are usually cautioned not to sacrifice accuracy for the sake of speed. It is far better to secure a correct story than one which may be in advance of the others, but incorrect in detail.

Thus, rumored romances or quietly recounted divorces may cost a paper thousands of dollars if some basis of truth is not established. Sometimes some papers "take a chance," knowing that those involved would not sue for the simple reason that they would not like to air their domestic affairs in public. Occasionally papers employ sleuths to watch every movement of those whom they suspect, and these

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investigators turn over their findings to trained newspapermen.

I remember a difficult case on which I was assigned late one evening, for such cases usually occur after dark. A sensational marriage had taken place a few months previous between a wealthy bachelor and a noted European singer, but a "tip" had been received at the office to the effect that the romancers were no longer on speaking terms. The City Desk wished to confirm this rumor, and several reporters were dispatched on separate errands. As it was my duty to shadow the "man in the case," I spent a most varied night careening about the city in a taxicab chartered for the purpose, diving into all sorts of strange, out-of-the-way localities and finally ending up at the apartment in which the former bachelor resided before his marriage. The following day the same thing happened, and for a week I made myself familiar with the habitat of the wealthy clubman; and then one day, as luck would have it, another "tip" was received that the couple we were so earnestly patronizing were about to sail for Europe, where a secret decree of divorce would be

sought. But the divorce never materialized, and as there was nothing strange in the doings of either the man or the woman we thereby saved the paper what might otherwise have been an extremely distasteful lawsuit.

One would be surprised at the number of residents of any large city who nightly attend revolutionary meetings in public buildings all over the city. In New York this is especially true, and hundreds of good, clear-thinking Americans are being influenced daily by the radical utterances of irresponsible persons.

The author has often attended meetings in churches where the Gospel of the Lord is supplanted by the anti-government verbal explosions of a misled citizen. He has delved into auditoriums where the air was filled with blasphemy and the clapping of hands. He has taken down the records of meetings where anarchy and sordid utterances reigned supreme, and he has gazed upon citizens whose integrity would never have been questioned had they not been watched as eager participants in some un-American demonstration.

CHAPTER XII

A VICTIM OF ARTIFICIALITY

CHRISTMAS morning, 1920, dawned bright and cold, snow had fallen during the night, completely covering the ground, and as yet but few street cleaners were about. In the years, heretofore, except those Christmases which had been spent in the army, the author had been able to take a few extra winks of much needed rest, but this Christmas was different. The night before the mighty City Editor had told all reporters that they would be expected at their desks not later than nine-thirty.

Shortly after ten o'clock I was on my way with orders to secure an interview from Maurice Maeterlinck, the Belgian poet. Furthermore, I was told not to return until my mission was complete. It was a hopeless outlook, for weeks before the news had been spread that although Maeterlinck was over here on a lecturing tour, he did not wish to be interviewed,

and it was certain that he was not going to be interviewed, if he and his party could prevent it.

Arriving at the apartment house where it was reported he was staying, I was greeted by the cheers and jeers of some dozen or more correspondents evidently in the same position as the author. Several camera men and one or two motion-picture operators were in the group.

Upon entering the building I told the telephone operator that a representative of the *New York Herald* wished to see Mr. Maeterlinck. At first the operator only giggled and said that each time she announced a new newspaperman the receiver was slammed down peremptorily. However, she took a chance, and to our surprise the answer was to "send him up."

The elevator man, another of us poor individuals who were obliged to work on this day of all days, looked me carefully up and down as though questioning whether I concealed a hidden weapon or was just a poor simpleton led astray by the fame of the Belgian muse. His remark as I left the car justified my belief:

"It's de door to de left, sir; I suppose dat's

wot y'want. He's de feller wot can make us come t'life again, dey tells me, but I'm tellin' yer he's one big fake."

I laughed and rang the bell. The door was opened almost immediately by a French maid, who quietly showed me into a little waiting room. In a few minutes Henry Russell, formerly a director of the new opera in Paris, as well as Covent Garden in London, and the Chicago Opera Company in Illinois, greeted me with outstretched hands. Mr. Russell told me that he was to be Maeterlinck's director in this country, especially as they were great personal friends. Although I had never met him personally before I distinctly remembered him as the producer of "Pelleas and Melisandre," one of Maeterlinck's first plays, which was given in Boston several years ago. Russell, in connection with Richard Hovey, is responsible for much of Maeterlinck's translations in this country.

He left me alone for a few minutes, and I amused myself by looking out of the window at the other newspapermen jogging up and down to keep from freezing on the sidewalk below. I was just wondering why I had been so lucky as to get to the point of attack so

quickly when the door reopened and Russell, in low tones, told me to advance, for the "Great Master," as he termed Maeterlinck, was awaiting my presence.

At first I thought he was joking. So I played up with the game and tiptoed into the hallway beyond. A few seconds elapsed and then the hall suddenly became quite dark and a curtain parted ahead of me. When my eyes became accustomed to this semi-dramatic effect I saw a long, tremendously high apartment hung in deep, rich damask, void of furniture with the exception of a few necessary tables and chairs, and singular to relate having only one little window. Through this a silvery light was shining into the far end of the room, which I later discovered was caused by the deep snow on nearby roofs. For a moment it so blinded me that I saw nothing of any one else, and then to the right of the window, in a deep easy chair, sat a figure clothed entirely in white. It seemed in deep meditation and did not move as I entered the room.

In my mind there buzzed back and forth those two strange words of a moment before, the "Great Master"; but what a different conception from the brain picture was the

one which now greeted my eye. The smoking jacket, for such it was, contrary to my opinion that Maeterlinck was still clothed in his pajamas, the blue bedroom slippers and the deep look of meditation strongly brought back the words of the elevator man who had brought me to this mysterious chamber.

When Maeterlinck arose to greet me, I realized the full dignity of the great man, and his very unconventional way soon impressed me. He was not young looking, yet far from old, and his thought that he was being imposed upon to make "effect" for the columns of the daily papers made me a bit indignant. We seated ourselves by the window overlooking the great city, and a calm smile soon settled over his face as though he were thinking of what Christmas meant to thousands of homes beneath the distant roofs.

Though far from garrulous in the presence of comparative strangers Maeterlinck talked freely enough about those things which seemed to be of foremost importance in his mind. His power of description was vivid, and yet expressed in English it was most amusing. We spoke chiefly in French, for he told me confidentially that English was as hard for him

to grasp as laughing would be to a pessimist.

"I am literally swamped with America's hospitality," he said to me, and his eyes moistened as he continued, "you Americans haven't given me time to breathe nor to thank you. I do not wish to hurt anybody's feelings, but how can I thank every one myself?"

"Do you see that cake over there on the table? A very poor old man brought it to me this morning. He said that he had avoided the attendants downstairs and had climbed many flights in order to reach me personally. I was then in my bath and my servant told him he couldn't see me. He said he didn't care how he saw me as long as he could just look at me and tell his friends whether I looked like what he thought I ought to look like, or not. I did not know that he was there and, hearing a slight noise in my living room, I got out of the bath, threw a towel around myself, and while still dripping wet went into the other room. The little old man bowed profusely and handed me the cake. He said he was a poor Belgian poet and had been up all night writing a verse and making his cake for me. He refused to give his name, as he

said it might look as though he were trying to get publicity.

"I was more touched by that cake than many other things I have received in years. I shall treasure it, if it can be treasured, as though it contained valuable jewels—and yet it is but one of a hundred gifts that have reached me in the past twenty-four hours. You Americans are indeed a generous, wonderful people."

Photographs do not do Maeterlinck justice, for he really radiates an atmosphere of peace and cordiality. Although it is a well established fact that he has always shut himself away from visitors, it is not because of any unwillingness on his part. I believe that his attitude toward the public has always been grossly misrepresented, for as a matter of fact he impressed me as being most kindly disposed toward the world in general. He is less likely to intimidate than to be intimidated. His deep sensibilities and the understanding of the emotions of his fellow men have made him the genius of the sphere in which he moves, and yet all of this had to be cast aside when he came to America, and instead a screen of foolishness erected in order to bewilder a news-

paperman, representing a paper that was published in Paris as well as in New York, who might in turn elaborate to an awestricken public. He justified my surmises when he next spoke.

"Usually I am scared to death of reporters. I have been picked apart and reassembled so many times that I am afraid to trust any of them. You newspapermen have so many expressions at which you snicker and laugh as though they conveyed great amusement. To me they are guttural and harsh sounding. My tongue always seems to come too late; the formation of the muscles of the mouth and tongue of the foreigner are too set to adapt themselves to your unphonetic spelling. French, on the other hand, is spoken with an intensity and ease the same as it is spelled."

Here he hesitated, then lighting a cigarette continued, "I have long wished to come to this weird and mysterious land, but I have always been afraid of that prying publicity for which America and Americans are renowned. And then, too, I did not know the language. Finally my friend, Henry Russell, bid me make my debut to tell Americans my discoveries of what happens to us after death. That is why I

am here to-day. Three weeks before my departure I got, as you Americans would say, 'cold in the feet,' and wrote Mr. Russell that I could not come, yet I am here all the same. I do not hesitate to tell you that I am a very nervous, timid individual, and that my greatest desire is to be left quiet and alone.

"Since I am here I shall talk, as I promised, on the hereafter, for I believe that I consider it from an entirely different point of view than the great Oliver Lodge. I believe in the personality of the soul continuing after what we call death. The war was a specter of martyrdom and it stirred us with tremendous pity and indignation. Many heavy hearts turned then, as they are turning now, to the messages which are coming to us from the after-life."

At this moment a little lady entered the room and stood for a second as though hesitating whether to advance or return from whence she had come. He caught her eye, and she came over beside him while I arose to go. She was a frail little thing and many years younger than her husband, and yet her affection for him was marked in everything that she did. Many are the stories we have

heard of Maeterlinck's personal life, his wives and his ideal of a perfect trio, but never a word did he mention of this to me; and it would have been hard to persuade me to believe that this was true, after the touching scenes which went on in his apartment that Christmas morning.

A bright light was shining on the great thinker, through the little roof-top window, as I passed through the door; drifts of cotton-like snow whisked themselves towards him, and a cheery, simple voice was saying: "Merry Christmas and, remember, I like your New York, and, I believe I love your America."

That was the last I saw of Maeterlinck from any degree of proximity. A week later the bulletin boards in various sections of the city announced that "Maurice Maeterlinck," the Belgian poet, would talk on after-life at Carnegie Hall, and I was assigned to "cover" the story. This was at the time when Maeterlinck could secure a line from Metropolitan newspapers for every breath he took.

Two days before the great speech I tried to secure from the person who had taught the Belgian to speak English his side of the story. It was my good fortune to find young

Sheridan Russell, the son of Henry Russell, responsible for the deed. The young man in question was delighted with the idea that his name would appear in the papers, and was willing to tell me everything. Although born in London in 1901 he had been educated with much care in various parts of Europe, so that he spoke nine languages fluently. His main ambition was far from languages, and probably would not be proper to record in these pages, but his ideas of teaching Maeterlinck were so droll that I could not refrain from laughing when he repeated them to me. The next morning we ran a two-column spread, giving Sheridan Russell's views of teaching a foreigner the English language.

The night after this, I wished with all my heart that we had not paid so much attention to when or where Maeterlinck learned to speak *his* "English."

There were two of us recording the address that evening, and would that there had been more! The hall was packed until not another solitary soul could have entered, and the silence before the lecturer began was very marked. I had been stationed in the back of the house, in order to cover those who were there, and any

stray bits of conversation. The lecturer was introduced by the Belgian Ambassador, and the national anthems of his country and ours were then played.

Being in the back of the hall it was difficult to hear very distinctly what was being said, and yet when Maeterlinck began to speak I believed that I was entirely losing my sense of proportion in words. It seems as though he were speaking Egyptian instead of our language, and I wondered whether that little imp, who told me he had taught him English, had taught him Japanese instead. For a long time the audience seemed to bear out a good deal more bravely than the press. Occasionally people would turn and look at each other, sometimes one would see an individual pushing at his ears, while others strained a little harder in order to catch some more of the queer phraseology. And then the inevitable happened. Hooting and catcalls from the galleries and laughing and hissing from the orchestra.

For a time the situation was most embarrassing. Many people left their seats and besieged the box-office, requesting a refund of their money. Reserves from one of the nearby police stations arrived and took charge

of the crowds at the ticket offices and firemen opened all the exits.

Charles Evans Hughes, who was on the platform, urged the audience to remain quiet and listen attentively so that they might understand the speaker, but the damage was done, and the hall began to empty itself. Maeterlinck was evidently in despair, but the noise continued. Finally some professor climbed on the stage and delivered a translation of the speech in good, clear-cut American, yet very few persons remained to hear what he had to say.

A few days after this affair came a rumor from the lyceum bureau people who had engaged Maeterlinck to speak in this country, that their contract had been broken and that they were about to sue the great thinker for a very large sum. Again the news-hounds were on the trail, but the bureau completely denied the rumor, stating, though, that they would have an injunction served so that the poet could not speak in any other language save English—and real English at that—while he was in this country.

Some days afterwards Maeterlinck's own publicity man announced that the poet would

deliver a lecture on after-life, in *French*, at the Ritz hotel. The newspaper offices were buzzing, and sure enough Maeterlinck spoke as he had promised, although he was surrounded by a score or more detectives.

The author had the pleasure of "covering" this recital, and gleaned probably more amusement out of it than from either of the preceding stories. The stage erected in the ballroom of the Ritz-Carlton was lined in deep blue velvet, with but one small light in the center. Fearing lest the lyceum bureau might endeavor to stop his lecture by serving him with a court injunction, Maeterlinck reached the stage from the street, many floors below, in the laundry elevator, which connected with the back of the stage. As he appeared before his audience he was closely followed by a tall, clean-shaven man, the mystery of whose presence caused much interest. It was revealed later that the man was none other than a sleuth from a private detective agency.

In the audience, at intervals, were more detectives, while outside the entrance of the room many plain-clothes men walked up and down. When Major P——, head of the lyceum bureau, entered the room, a great buzzing

occurred and the poet retired to the back of the stage, but the major seemed as much amused at the scene as the audience and nothing occurred beyond a lot of good-natured laughter.

Maeterlinck delivered his lecture in French, and the entire time the private detective sat close beside him, one hand in his pocket, grasping the butt of a burly revolver, the other stroking his chin, while endeavoring with alert vision to seem as interested as possible in all that the poet was saying. Occasionally he clapped his hands and once or twice finding that this was not quite '*au fait*' relapsed into an indifferent position. He was plainly trying to be as affable as he could but realized, as did the audience, that this was at times quite impossible.

That evening as the author brought in the story concerning Maeterlinck's attempted lecture during the afternoon, the City Editor told him in a quiet but firm manner that no more space would be given the Belgian poet until he commenced "acting like a man" instead of "a young and foolish child." Although I admit that I was astonished, I later realized the truth. Maeterlinck continued for sometime to do queer and rather amazing things, probably

in a vain attempt to get the ears and eyes of the press, and then seeing that this was utterly impossible, slipped into complete oblivion as far as this country was concerned.

It was a sad end for a genius.

CHAPTER XIII

SQUIRREL FOOD

“FOOLS rush in where angels fear to tread.”

One would be certain that Pope had justly predicted, were one to enter the visitors' room of any large metropolitan newspaper near the bewitching hour of midnight.

It was many weeks after I had begun reporting when I noticed that New York contained many irrational people—whose chief occupation is to pester newspaper offices.

A few months after I had been assigned to our criminology department, there happened to be a lack of criminal news; so that several of us spent most of the evenings whiling away our time. Occasionally we went to the visitors' room to question some one who had sent in to see the editor. We always had to explain that the editor was occupied or that he had left the office, in order to ascertain what the visitor wanted.

Most of those who frequent the outer office are "regulars"; that is to say they turn up regularly every few days with a peculiar piece of information, which is not of much consequence. There are others, often prominent citizens, who desire to secure publicity for a cause in which they are interested and deem that the best way to get it is by calling personally at the office. But the strangest *mêlée* of all are the wild-eyed, feeble-minded Don Quixotes, with predictions of terrible disasters upon their lips.

At first the assignment of the outer office seemed dry and uninteresting, when a fire or a murder was reported, and I was often rather disappointed to be sent out there. Later, it seemed as though the visitors' room was the most interesting in the building, especially when one desired to study poverty of intellect. The simplicity of the narrow-minded as seen by a reporter is indeed a more thorough human story than the psychopathic ward in Bellevue Hospital.

The first case which left an impression upon the author occurred one evening at about eleven o'clock. A gentleman of means, whose

name was as well known as the President's, had sent in his card; and although it was not customary for him to call upon the editor, the latter was no respecter of custom, so he told a reporter to see what the distinguished one wanted.

In the visitors' room, which was about half a block away from the Editorial Department, some sixteen woe-begone individuals were seated. As I entered, each in turn arose and looked expectantly toward me; but the one to whom I desired to speak was easily recognizable. Elderly, pompous, and very dignified, he possessed all the attributes which motion pictures lend their would-be magnates."

"Are you the editor, young man?" he questioned, without rising from his seat.

I explained that the editor had just stepped out to get something to eat and that the assistant editor was extremely busy as we were going to "press." He looked rather disgruntled, but probably realized that it was imperative to place in print whatever he had to say and that to do so he would have to hurry.

"All right, young man; now let's get down to business," was his reply.

From a deep, black despatch case he drew

forth a great collection of material, mainly blueprints and unintelligible script. This he laid on the sofa between us and, adjusting his spectacles, continued:

"It is of the utmost importance, young man, that this material should be placed before the public in your morning edition. A Vigilance League has been formed by prominent men to give voice to the average citizen's protest against prohibition. The league will support an action recently started in Washington in the United States Court to test the validity of the Eighteenth Amendment and to present the people's case against it.

"We members of this committee have no interest in or connection with the liquor business. We are not concerned about restoring the saloon nor do we defend the evils of the liquor traffic. What we do say is that the fight for prohibition has been grossly mismanaged and that the rights of millions of men and women who are temperate, sober and decent and who find pleasure in the moderate use of light liquors, have been entirely ignored."

He would have continued for I know not

how long had I not arisen at the moment. Although indignant, he knew not what to say. I told him we had received quantities of that material during the past few days and that he was only wasting his time by telling me more about it. When he had departed I realized, as I had done when he spoke to me, that he merely wished to place his name in print in order to counteract rumors which were current at that time to the effect that he had been backing the Prohibitionists with tremendous sums of money.

Radicals of one sort or another, chiefly of the harmless variety, often entered the visitors' room with schemes for the betterment of the relations between capital and labor. Was it not Voltaire who said that ideas were like beards, for men did not have them until they grew up?

Sometimes persons temporarily deranged would put in an appearance and often we would see that they reached comfortable lodgings before the night was over. How well I remember an elderly woman who caused a commotion on Christmas eve.

The page-boy had informed the editor that

a particularly wild-eyed personage, scantily attired, was waiting him in the outer office with the information that she would not move until he repaid her the million dollars he had borrowed ten years before. The editor told me to see what she looked like and to try to convince her she must have loaned her money to some one *less prosperous* than he.

When I gazed at her through a crack in the wall, I knew at once she was the type of person a squirrel would delight to meet. Her hair was unbrushed and waving in every direction and her black dress seemed about ready to fall apart. Aside from this she wore absolutely no shoes or stockings upon her feet!

I accosted her from the doorway, fearing lest she might mistake me for the editor. Her eyes were blurred and she smiled with an uncanny twist of her lips.

"Ain't you de feller dat took my million?" she was saying, while I edged nearer the stairway. "Well, I wants it back and I wants it quick."

I tried to convince her that she was mistaken. I told her no one in the office had a million dollars and very few of them had nerve

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enough to borrow that sum. She kept repeating that she wanted the "million" and that she wouldn't leave until she got it. I told her I feared then that she would be obliged to stay all night; but there was no sign of restfulness upon her face, and fearful lest she might try to do damage, I returned to the city desk.

Four other reporters, each in turn, went out to see what they could do; one of them came back in a hurry with the information that she had endeavored to scratch his eyes out. There was great mirth at this, and for a time it looked as though the City Editor would have to break a rule and see the mistress of a million, himself.

And then it was that the page-boy burst into the Editorial Room with the information that she was disrobing herself. What could mere men do in that case? One reporter called for an ambulance; another went out to get a policeman; a third followed the page into the hall to find out if what he said was true! He returned a few moments later, with an expression of relief upon his face:

"I gave her a dime," he said, "and told her that was all the editor could pay now, but

that if she returned ten years later he would give her her money with six per cent interest."

Many persons possessed of an inventive mind are also pests of the newspaper outer offices. They do not seem to realize that news and personal material are different languages, and when they seek to secure two or three columns devoted exclusively to their inventive minds they are doing themselves an injustice. William Winter has told us that a newspaper, like a theater, must mainly owe its continuance in life to the fact that it pleases many persons; and in order to please many persons it will, unconsciously perhaps, respond to their several tastes, reflect their various qualities, and reproduce all their views.

Some nuisances are inventive as an excuse. One evening this was clearly demonstrated by a young man of demure aspect who showed the author his latest invention. The blueprints were extravagant and the descriptive material took up volumes of typewritten pages. It was a machine to be attached to the masts of all ocean liners; and in mechanical language he explained that a vacuum coil (which he had devised two years before) would then attract all

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the electricity in the surrounding atmosphere, which would be conducted into the sea by means of specially constructed brass wires. This he claimed would entirely eliminate the severe electrical storms which were at that time descending upon the east coast.

Another man, as eccentric as a comet, had a habit of paying us a visit once or twice a month, with a device which although not patented, he believed ought to be. His ideas were like bad quarters, for he spent his life trying to pass them off on some one else. At one time he fell heir to the receipt of a new salve, which he was certain would cure any open wound in less time than anything previously invented. He tried to demonstrate this upon the man who ran the elevator at the visitors' entrance and it took a policeman's club to clear the situation.

Cripples are not excepted from the kaleidoscope which revolves about the outer office. Many blinded and limbless persons are constantly seeking aid. Mothers trying to locate their children, and wives searching for their husbands, make a newspaper office as much their headquarters as the police stations. And, with the good, there are also the bad.

Wounded soldiers were among this type in 1920, the difficult part being that of separating the just from the otherwise. They would appear at night, along with the rest of the nondescript multitude; and their questions would be answered and advice given in the same manner as that donated at the charity booths in the streets below.

All reporters have had "episodes" which stand out in their minds, but I believe the one the author had on New Year's Day beats them all. The page-boy had announced a one-legged soldier, who desired some information which he thought he might procure, as we published an edition every morning in Paris. He was a good-looking young fellow, dressed in khaki, and leaning on crutches, and his desired information softened my heart. He told me his fiancée had gone to France as a nurse in hopes of being near him; that was two years ago, but to this day he had never received another word from her. We cabled this information to Paris, together with the girl's name and former address. He departed from the office filled with thanks.

Scarcely ten minutes later the boy again an-

nounced a one-legged soldier. I told him he was mistaken as I had just seen that man, but he laughed and said it was a different fellow. So out I went, and there seated on a sofa was a man in civilian clothes, wearing a service button, his left limb amputated at the knee. He told me he had lost it in a railway accident in France, and that although the hospital had discharged him he could not get any work in New York. He said he was starving and that his wife and child were at the point of death. He wanted to borrow enough money to get them all back to Scranton, Pa., which he promised to repay as soon as he could afford to. Without telling the editor, I loaned him the amount and sent a messenger to the Pennsylvania Station to see that he really took the train. I never expected to hear from him again, but two months later I received the full amount of my loan in return.

As I was resuming my seat in the office, the page again returned and said there was another one-legged man awaiting me. It had then become a joke with the other reporters; so, naturally, as many as could do so came out to watch the proceedings. This time the soldier was a

fat, foreign-looking man, about middle-age, with a bald head. He complained that he could not get work, that he was starving, and that since leaving the hospital his wounded knee had festered so that it was giving him blood poisoning. He wanted to borrow fifty dollars in order to take care of all these things as soon as possible. I calmly told him, however, that the *Herald* did not loan money to any one and I feared we could do nothing. He swore under his breath in German, and, understanding the language, I asked him where he was born. He appeared indignant and said it was none of my business and then hobbled off on his crutches downstairs. Two of the reporters followed him and thereby hangs the tale. They said he went to a tenement in a crowded west-side district and entered a room. They took turns looking through the keyhole, only to find that the amputated limb was in reality the lower part of his leg bent back at the knee joint and firmly bandaged to the hip. It later developed that this imposter had been a double-jointed actor in pre-war days, but was interned for two years and, upon being released, had gained a living by posing as a

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wounded soldier upon the streets of New York, with occasional trips to newspaper offices.

While some people, to use Churchill's expression, try to varnish nonsense with the charms of sound, others choose the literary path; for many are the letters addressed to the editor of a large news organ. I think the most amusing one ran as follows:

Dear Sir:—If you will lend me two hundred dollars I will be *in-debt* to you for life.

CHAPTER XIV

A FOREIGN BUYER

"IN the spring a young man's fancy turns to," etc., etc. Such is the manner of the ancient prophecy.

Yet in the Spring, of which I am writing, my thoughts had turned to entirely different means of existence. First, the work on the newspaper staff required most of my time, and secondly, I was right in the midst of a campaign to sell an old and very dilapidated automobile.

Several months before, a friend whose name was well known in the automobile field, had told me of an auction in which an automobile he desired to purchase was to be sold. He was afraid to use his name as the price might increase, and he was afraid to appear on the ground in case he should be recognized by some of those on the auction floor.

He asked me to bear the brunt, and for friendship I consented, yet I'll venture to ad-

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mit that it's the last time I'll ever be thus helpful for any one, no matter how good a friend he proves to be.

I bid on the car, and was left to pay for it. The amount being a good deal larger than the pocket money which I gained in those days, left a considerable hole in the place from which it came, and I remained with an outrageous monster upon my hands. What to do with it, I knew not. To make matters worse, the man I had so brazenly trusted went into bankruptcy, and having no written agreement with him, I could do nothing.

For eight months I did all in my power to rid myself of the monster which had jarred its way into my innermost sensibilities, but no solution offered itself. Advertising in all the papers, from which one usually finds just rewards, brought one no nearer a solution.

About this same time the country of Czecho-Slovakia was endeavoring to place itself, in a commercial manner, before the people of the United States. Representatives of the new republic had appeared in eastern cities, and numerous buyers, armed with heavily sealed credentials, had made themselves known to the public press.

It was a foregone conclusion in the newspaper office in which I worked that a great many of these so-called buyers were none other than professional "fakirs," eager to grasp every penny on which they were able to lay their hands. It was, therefore, agreed that our policy would be to give no one publicity unless he were recommended by some reputable institution.

One afternoon, I was ordered to cover a luncheon of foreign diplomats, given in honor of the representative of Hungary's Premier. The luncheon was not supposed to be recorded in the press, but was merely to acquaint the heads of the metropolitan journals with this emissary of Dr. Huszar. Some one on the staff of our paper found he could not attend and I was sent in his place. Later I rather fancied some one had been "tipped off" beforehand that the luncheon would be a dull affair, and having a grudge against me, he had decided to "pass the buck" to the poor, unsuspecting "cub."

When I arrived at the Plaza Hotel, and told the toastmaster that the man I represented could not be present, he bowed most graciously

and asked me to take the absent gentleman's seat just the same. I did so. I scarcely remember to this day who was present at the luncheon; however, the name of Cyrus H. K. Curtis, publisher of *The Saturday Evening Post*, impressed itself on me, for that very dignified gentleman sat opposite me, with the most bored of expressions.

There were many speakers, mainly those who at some time or another in their careers had erred long enough to visit the new republic, and who proclaimed it a most wonderful land, the resources of which would ever be a market for American capital. I believe I listened to more genuine foolishness that afternoon than ever before; but as I was obliged to represent a dignified newspaper, I could do nothing but appear to be keenly interested.

Beside me there sat a wild-eyed foreigner. He appeared to enjoy the food that was placed before him more than the conversation that was going on about him, and it was not until we had finished the salad that he even looked up and took notice of the situation. I wondered whether he had ever been visited by any of our highly advertised Relief Commissioners.

When the dessert was passed he turned to me and smiled broadly.

"This is bully chow," he said, in the broadest western accent, while I smothered a startled exclamation.

"Haven't tasted the like of it since I went to the Moulin Rouge in Paris two months ago."

As I could not include the Moulin Rouge, in Paris in my vocabulary of that region, and as I had never heard that the food in that emporium was any too remarkable, I thought it best to agree with him.

An elderly gentleman was telling his audience that he was a well-to-do Pacific coast manufacturer. He claimed that prices had so increased since the commencement of hostilities that he had been obliged to close his plant near Portland, Oregon. Furthermore, he said, that just as the silver lining was fading from his vision, his attention was called to Czecho-Slovakia. He set forth immediately for that country. To-day, he said, he was manufacturing all his material in Silesia, at a cost including transportation there and back of twelve per cent lower than the price paid before the

war. His anecdote met with a great deal of applause, although some of those at the table, including my friend opposite, breathed a visible sigh of relief.

A telegram from Dr. Masaryk, president of the new republic, closed the conference.

As I was leaving, my companion with the great hunger tapped me lightly upon the arm and asked me to accompany him next door. We went into a large smoking-room and seated ourselves upon some deep plush chairs.

"What newspaper do you represent, young man?" was the first question I heard myself being asked.

I told him it was the *Herald*.

"Ah," he replied, as though in deep meditation, "the same as that which appears in Paris? Well, then, we are sure to be friends."

I told him I hoped so, and got up to leave him. I had not grown as fond of this strange, eccentric man as he appeared to be of me.

When I reached the office I said nothing to the City Desk of my acquaintance, but next day I was told that a Czecho-Slovakian representative had called many times asking that the gentleman who had attended the luncheon the day

before communicate with him as soon as he came in.

Late that afternoon I presented myself at the door of an apartment on upper Madison Avenue. Soon afterward the buyer joined me and we walked into Central Park. We found a comfortable seat, and he expounded to me the need for publicity in running the campaign he had agreed to manage for the new republic of Europe. He told me a weird story, which I was loath to believe.

He claimed that about four months before he had been starving in Chicago. One evening when he believed his last hours had come, he decided to jump in the lake and end his misery. He was crossing Lake Shore Boulevard when he noticed an elderly gentleman scratching in the gravel as though trying to find something. An automobile was coming directly for the old man, and had not my story teller jumped toward him, he claimed, the old man would surely have been killed. The gentleman proved none other than the western representative for Czecho-Slovakia, and as a recompense had offered to make him a foreign buyer for the republic.

He added that he had several million dol-

lars at his disposal, but that in order to get in touch with the right kind of people he had to be better known, and that he therefore had to have some publicity. As I had never taken a course in advertising, I did not know what advice to give him, and we commenced walking back to his apartment.

When we reached there he espied my ramshackle car, which was standing in front of the door. I told him that I was trying to sell it, and that although it was in good condition, it was such an ungainly object no one wanted to have anything to do with it. He told me that if he had enough money of his own he would buy it, drive up and down Fifth Avenue, and thereby gain publicity.

The following day this same man, whom we shall call Mr. Williams in order to simplify matters, reached me by telephone. I met him in the evening during the time allotted to my supper. He said he was "honored to know me," and though I believed for a long time that he might be temporarily deranged, I felt almost sure after this outbreak that my surmises were correct.

He was a great deal more polite than the evening before, and after long explanations

of the material he wished to possess, asked me if I knew where he could buy very quickly a thousand automobiles for export.

I gave him the names of many concerns that dealt in second-hand cars, all of which had become familiar objects to me during the past eight months, and I finally told him, as though with great reluctance, that I would sell him my car, if he could pay the price I asked.

Mr. Williams said he would give me the price I asked provided I could show him what the car would do in traffic. A few minutes later we were driving through the theatrical crowds on Broadway. In and out we wound our way, until we finally drew up at the *Herald* office. He entered and placed a large half-column ad, requesting all second-hand automobile dealers to apply to him, as he wished to export a thousand automobiles at once to Czecho-Slovakia.

Next morning, as far as the eye could reach on Madison Avenue, in the locality of Mr. Williams' apartment, there were all kinds and sorts of automobiles. It was enough of a story to which any newspaper could devote a column. I was eager to learn whether the checks which Mr. Williams would presumably

pay would come back, and whether the elusive, eccentric man would disappear as swiftly as he had come upon the scene.

Williams did not seem to be satisfied with the cars, and after taking down the addresses turned them all away. When I asked him his reason he said he must communicate first with the "higher-ups," and then he would let me know whether he would buy the cars. He was very insistent, however, on purchasing an automobile, but as I had had a good offer from a reliable source that morning I did not like to part with the machine to one whose notions proved so queer.

When I returned to my office after lunch the editor asked me about my car. He informed me that a Czecho-Slovakian buyer had called up the office of the *Herald* and told him that I had inserted an ad in the paper requesting to buy a thousand automobiles, and giving, instead of my name, his name. He said he resented very much the appearance of all these peculiar cars of every make and description outside of his apartment, and that his life was being made miserable by the questions of their owners.

It was then for the first time that I grasped

the scheme, and great was the rage which I vented upon him over the telephone. The following day not a word appeared in the papers concerning the transactions of the would-be buyer, but half a dozen papers sent representatives to find out whether the elusive Mr. Williams was really a representative of Czecho-Slovakia or not. No one seemed to have the slightest idea as to his identity. One paper suggested to the medical authorities that he be taken to Bellevue Hospital for observation; when they reached his apartment he had disappeared.

For six weeks I did not see him, and then one day while bound for the west, somebody tapped my shoulder in the Grand Central Station. I looked up and saw a poor, unshaven, very badly dressed individual smiling at me, through reams of deep wrinkles. I recognized the mysterious Mr. Williams.

"America may be well versed in the gentle art of publicity," he said, "but it takes Czecho-Slovakia to put it all over her."

To this day the representatives of that republic firmly deny they knew or had anything to do with the Mr. Williams who tried to gain free publicity for them.

CHAPTER XV

THE COPY-READER

TITLES are held by some people to be as valuable as precious stones in this great democracy of ours. Yet, did not some wiseacre tell us that all is not gold that glitters? And so, to the press, because of their news value, as well as to the public, some European titles mean a great deal more than they really should.

Therefore, when it is learned that a foreigner, be he ever so humble, has reached this country, the reporters descend like a covey of vultures, eager to grab the last morsel of individuality from the urbane European, and to distort his words in the same manner as Central Europe distorted our language in 1917.

The Countess de Rodellec du Porzic, wife of a member of one of the remaining really old families in France, upon her arrival in New York sought refuge from squads of reporters, camera and motion-picture men, at the St.

Regis Hotel. It was not only her title and her record in the war, but the fact that she, as an American girl, had married in France and had achieved fame, that added to her merit. The grand-daughter of William Jones, an influential banker of almost half a century ago, and the sister of Mrs. Charles A. Post, the Countess du Porzic was indeed a celebrated character in America.

For twelve days the newspapermen lay siege at the hotel, without once being able to recover as much as a word from the very important foreigner, for be it known that Madame de Rodellec detested publicity.

It was during this so-called siege that the author of these notes one day was lunching at the St. Regis. A staff man on one of the other papers called him aside and asked him whether he had as yet been successful, and not having even been apprised of her arrival, the author was obliged to announce that he knew nothing at all concerning the lady in question. During luncheon, however, I happened to recall that the name was most familiar, and then, all at once, the scene changed.

Early in the spring of 1918 I was quar-

tered in the stable of a chateau in Northern France. The officer for whom I was a despatch driver lived at the chateau in luxury and comfort; the orderlies and chauffeurs bunked in the stable. Of Gothic architecture and filled with numerous works of art, fine tapestries and valuable paintings, Kersteers was one of the most beautiful edifices in this area. For many months the home of allied wounded and of later date the headquarters of American generals and staffs, it will be remembered by thousands who saw active service at the front.

I had not been there long before I was called upon to act as interpreter for an American major, who was at that time provost marshal of the nearby village. Madame de Rodellec recognized something in my accent and asked my name. It developed that she had known my mother and many members of my family in her younger days, and incidentally my quarters were transferred from the stable to the chateau itself. But to return to my story.

An hour later I was seated in the apartment of the Countess, chatting away at great length, and telling her and her little niece of the many things which had happened since I

had last seen them. Finally, I broached the subject of an interview and the good lady threw up her hands in horror. I tried to persuade her that if she would give me the exact details and tell me whatever she liked, I would make a perfectly correct and absolutely truthful story. I pointed out that if she kept on refusing to see the reporters she would have to remain in her room the entire time she was in America, and added that if she gave me permission to use only a few lines, I would guarantee to drive away all the newspapermen and assure her that they would not return unless she wanted to see them.

"But, it is so annoying to see all that I have said and many things which I should never think of saying, in the papers all the time," said Madame de Rodellec, in great distress. "The reporters, they never seem to be able to say what they are told to say. And then, besides, they always enlarge and increase on every little thing which they are told."

"In Paris, we had a terrible time with them. They wanted to know my age, and when and where I was born. I told them they were too impertinent for words and I refused flatly to answer any of their rude questions. They told

me I didn't have to tell them, for they would telegraph the Bureau of Records and find out my entire personal history, and so I let them do so.

"The next day there were headlines in the papers stating that I had formerly been the owner of the great Black Diamond. Thirty-eight newspaper representatives besieged my rooms at the Crillon Hotel. I could see the camera and moving-picture men training their apparatus at the front door and I could hear the reporters swearing under their breaths in the hallway. But I remained in my room nine days, until finally I summoned the police, who forcibly removed those awful men, who would have made my entire Paris visit a nightmare.

"At last I prepared a bulletin stating my occupation, and that I had been the owner of the Black Diamond. My statement was published and the press let me alone. When we left Paris, however, an American correspondent happened to be aboard the train and insisted upon coming into our compartment and asking us all about how I happened to lose the great Black Diamond.

"I began to think that the people were more interested in that miserable diamond than they

were in the Peace Treaty, so I never said a word the entire journey. When we reached Cherbourg there were allied correspondents to meet us; they took our photographs and they ran along beside us, with pencil and paper in hand, writing and describing all the things we never said, and all the things we never did. I fully expected to see ourselves falling off the dock or jumping into an aeroplane, but we did not have a chance to see the French papers before we sailed.

"And it was the same way when we arrived in this city. We escaped, however, and came ashore in the doctor's boat. They landed us on Staten Island and an automobile brought us here. You now see, though, why we are afraid of publicity and why we detest talking to the reporters."

I did, and I pitied them, yet as I had already gained access to their room, I knew I could not go downstairs without something to tell my compatriots. Therefore, I urged Madame de Rodellec to say a few words, impressing upon her again and again that they would appear just as she wished them to appear, and nothing more, nor less. At last she relented and agreed to tell me something which might be repeated

to Americans who had served as soldiers in France, and had perhaps seen her chateau and remembered her and her little niece.

"I can never express my gratitude and my thanks for the wonderful way in which you Americans showed your valor in France," began the Countess. "At the beginning of the war we only knew the American Ambulance Service, that remarkable group of valiant men who were ever at our beck and call in any and every emergency. When the United States severed connections with Germany we thought it would be many long and weary months before we saw any American troops. The French people wondered what manner of men the American soldiers would be. They discussed around their eating tables whether they would resemble the British, and conduct themselves as the Belgians. They queried as to whether they would be dark complexioned like the Italians, or small and sturdy as the French. And then one day, five weeks after they had declared war on Germany, they came to us. I believe I was one of the first women to welcome the Americans in France.

"There were tears in the eyes of the French mothers as they kissed the cheeks of the tall,

masterly, erect young Americans, who had come four thousand miles in answer to Lafayette's call for help. There were cheers and handshakes from the maimed French heroes who watched the Americans on their way to the rest camps; and there was laughter in the eyes of the little boys and girls as they played around the feet of the giants from across the sea. That was the beginning.

"The days went by and the weeks too, and every day brought more and more stalwart, youthful Americans. They came by the hundreds, by the thousands. They filed through our little village, with vigor in their eyes and revenge written in their hearts. Occasionally bands playing lively music, such as the French had not heard in years, accompanied them. We learned your great patriotic 'Over There' and our hearts filled with sorrow and pity as we thought what was in reality awaiting you *Over Here*.

"Many of those youngsters who laughingly bade us adieu never came back. Many of them had their last taste of mother love and home when they left our little village. Some of them lie beneath the sod in the grave-yard at my chateau.

"It was my honor to quarter your General John F. O'Ryan and some of his staff. After he had gone I knew what it was to respect all you youngsters who wore the khaki of America. I know to-day what it is when I see a wounded man in the streets. America came to help France, just as France had helped America a hundred or more years ago, and France will never, never forget America."

Madame de Rodellec was weeping as she finished telling me this, and I thanked her from the bottom of my heart for giving me her impressions as a representative of French mothers and mother love. I arose to go but realized she had not finished.

"My little niece here," she continued, "is only fourteen, yet she has seen and borne so much these past six years that she seems to be a great deal older. Both her brothers served with the French Army. The eldest was a sergeant in the Dragoons; he was a daring horseman and a valiant young swordsman. At the beginning of the war he was seriously wounded in Belgium and was later taken prisoner. For three years he went through untold horrors in German prison camps, and in 1918 he was sent to Switzerland, where he has only

recently married a sweet little girl whom he had known since childhood and who was serving as a nurse to exchanged prisoners-of-war.

"Her youngest brother, who was heir to the title, was a lieutenant in the famous Blue Devils. He is said to have been the youngest Frenchman to have received the Legion of Honor. He also was decorated with the Croix de Guerre. He returned home a few days after you left for the front in 1918 and was killed on the night of his twentieth birthday.

"My husband, the late Count Oliver de Rodellec, had seen service in the diplomatic corps most of his life, and during hostilities served for some time in the Ministry of War and as advisor to the French Military Cabinet. So you see, we too, in our family have been patriotic, and we have given our best blood in the cause of victory."

Another member of Madame de Rodellec's family had seen service, for I later learned that her father, who was a Frenchman, raised a regiment of Zouaves during the Civil War and was commissioned the youngest Major-General in the Northern Army. Of fighting stock was this grand old lady, and the people of New York who read her story must have

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been favorably impressed and glad that she had a title.

As I left her apartment the Countess again impressed upon me the promise of removing the other reporters and of securing an absolutely authentic story, one of which she could long be proud.

"I am a constant reader of your paper," she told me. "Marie Antoinette, here, learned most of her English through reading from it. It gives me great pleasure to find therefore a friend of mine on the staff of such a wholesome American paper. And furthermore I'm glad you didn't ask me anything about the Black Diamond, or my age, or anything else which would be embarrassing. I owned, I admit, the great Black Diamond, but a nephew of mine was drowned on the *Titanic* as he was bringing it to America, so I no longer have it. And my age, well, you can guess that, and if you can't you can find it as the other reporters said, in the Bureau of Records."

Upon arriving in the hall of the St. Regis, I told the other newspapermen just enough of a story to make them all get back to their offices, and yet not enough for them to "beat"

me with mine, and I returned to my City Editor.

As soon as the story had been written, I was sent out to cover a fire, which lasted two hours and which destroyed a large building in the theatrical district. I had no sooner come back from that and turned in my material than I was sent out to report on a meeting of the Union Grave Diggers, an organization affiliated with the American Federation of Labor. Returning from this out I went again to get the particulars concerning two men who had been killed in a powder plant explosion at Wayne, New Jersey, and I did not return until the wee hours of the morning.

An elderly reporter, who had a desk near me in the city room, had been covering a group of "small fry" as well, and he came over to chat with me. I told him of my big story of the day, and he told me of his story, which he believed was equally big. He had discovered in a small boarding house in the upper reaches of the city the man who had designed the Paris underground sewerage system. It was a good story and would probably receive a column "spread," he informed me.

Something must have gone wrong with the copy department machinery for our stories got mixed.

A few moments later the first edition of the morning *Herald* came off the rollers and to my amazement I read the following:

"Countess de Rodellec du Porzic, who is held in grateful remembrance by thousands of American soldiers, home from France, arrived in this country three weeks ago. Yesterday she was interviewed by a staff reporter and told him of her admiration of the Americans who had served in France.

"The arrival of the Countess in this country is of great importance, for it will be remembered that her distinguished husband was the inventor and designer of the Paris underground sewerage system, etc., etc."

CHAPTER XVI

THE FIGHTING MAYOR

FROM coast to coast and throughout the entire world the name of Ole Hansen rang forth in 1919; and it is doubtful whether there was a person interested in the affairs of the United States who did not know of him and his work.

Seattle, one of the rivals of New York on the Pacific Coast, and the largest and most prosperous city in the northwest, was the center of a general strike, the like of which had never before been witnessed. Troops from Camp Lewis, the largest cantonment in the country, machine gun battalions and infantry, had been summoned, and within a few days Ole Hansen, the mayor of the city, was reported to have quelled the uprising. Mr. Hansen was "made," to use the vernacular of the reporters, and he must have known it, for a few months later he resigned as chief execu-

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tive and launched a series of lectures throughout the country.

In the fall of the year, there was a persistent rumor that Mr. Hansen was thus preparing to become an aspirant for the republican nomination for President. And indeed, at this time his thorough prescription for the cure of radicalism had made sensational progress for him in every community. Besides, he failed to deny these rumors, probably since they were current more in the east than in the west. He continued to maintain absolute silence.

On the twenty-third of September the author arrived in Seattle, having been sent from New York on a swift and interesting mission; and two hours later presented himself on the ninth floor of the Smith Building, a tower-like structure, the highest in the city and the pride of the neighborhood. An office secluded at the far-end of a hall, bearing no name or device upon its doorway, with the exception of a numeral, greeted me; and after knocking a few times I was told to come in.

The room, which looked out upon the bay, full of shipping, was bare with the exception of a desk at its furthest end, at which was seated a young and exceedingly polite man.

The author did not try to conceal his mission, stating simply that he had been sent four thousand miles overland to obtain an interview with the fighting mayor of Seattle, and that he hoped his mission would be successful.

A few minutes later Ole Hansen appeared, smiling radiantly with hands outstretched, his abundant white hair brushed carefully back from his forehead, and the deep grooves of responsibility visible on his cheeks. During the hour that I conversed with him, both from his appearance and from that which he told me, I judged him equal to the heavy responsibility of any office that the people of this country might confer on him. His clarity of expression, and the terse and rather picturesque manner in which he spoke reminded me somewhat of the late Col. Roosevelt.

We seated ourselves at his desk, which was covered with manuscripts, pamphlets and socialistic literature; for he was then completing his "Cause and Cure of Bolshevism." G. A. Ross's "Russia in Upheaval," and John Spargo's "Bolshevism," were at his elbow, while behind him "Labor in Europe and America," Coleman's great success, attracted my attention. A few photographs lined the

top shelves of a law-book cabinet, in one of which I noticed a large family group, his wife and nine children. His eldest son, a lad of twenty-three, because of ill-health was not fit to serve his country during the war, so Mr. Hansen took his place and served the nation as mayor of one of the most turbulent cities in the country.

After discussing my trip across the continent, the effect of the Prince of Wales' visit to the Dominion and countless other things, the mayor of Seattle, Mr. Hansen, calmly inquired what he could do for me. Possibly my quiet reply was just as baffling as his question.

"I came from New York," I answered, "to ask if you are thinking of the presidency as your ultimate goal?"

His brown eyes flashed at me keenly as he bent forward and replied:

"A better man than myself should be chosen as candidate for President—a man more fitted and with greater experience. He should surround himself with the best men in our country, or else he will be, regardless of his particular abilities, only a twenty-five per cent President. He should be a nationalist and not an

internationalist, for the sentimental internationalist is a positive danger in times like these.

"We must preserve and develop our national morale, or else we will not be in a position to be of international help. The internationalist loves all countries but will fight for no country. No one can love more than one country any more than he can love more than one woman; and if he says he does, then his love is of the tepid, indiscriminate, skimmed milk variety; skin deep—and thin skin at that.

"I am not a candidate for any office whatsoever, but I do want to be a valuable and worthy private citizen. I want to serve in whatever capacity I believe I can do the most good, for any man who at the present time is giving thought to personal ambition in public office, unless he believes he can do the most good for his country therein, is not a good American. This is a time when every man and woman in the United States should be thinking about something far different than personal aggrandizement or partisanship. There is too much selfishness in the minds of our people and of our leaders, for the problems confronting our nation are worthy

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of the biggest thoughts of our best men, and they must be solved. These questions cannot be laid aside forever; we must meet them now.

"This war has shifted our population from the country to the city, and most of the new, young, city men have nothing to hold on to, and therefore there is more or less unrest. In wartime these men had the ideals of patriotism to mold them together, and they became cogs in the gigantic national machine. At present they seem to have neither home ties nor religion, and it is this element that is a great factor in the cause of the present unrest.

"Propaganda will stand for a time unless scattered by the truth, for the value of advertising ideals has not yet been sensed by our patriotic citizenry; it has always been known by the opposite class. Our bookshops are filled with tons of socialistic propaganda in one form or another; our patriotic countrymen have but little to combat it, except the Holy Bible and the Constitution of the United States, and neither of these seem to be popular nowadays. A truth told, will spread; a lie, too, will spread, but despite the general belief the truth will, nine times out of ten, overtake the lie.

"All I can ask for or desire is that all good Americans study the fundamentals upon which their government is based and from it spread the truth, for this will overtake the tissues of lies that are enveloping the nation."

On December 6, several weeks after my interesting interview in Seattle, I was seated at the press table of the Silk Association of America's dinner at the Astor Hotel in New York. Mayor Hansen, then in the midst of his Americanization tour of the country, was scheduled to speak, and many prominent men and women from all over the city were present to hear him.

Although there were over twenty reporters at my table, Mr. Hansen recognized me as soon as he took his place at the speakers' table, and reached over to shake hands.

His topic that evening was Americanization, and he spoke exceedingly well; cheers were continuous for many minutes at a time, and when he was through he was escorted to the door by a prominent committee while every member of the fifteen hundred present did him honor by standing as he passed out.

For two weeks after this I scarcely attended a repast but that Mr. Hansen sat at the

speakers' table, and delivered his well prepared talks, and always thousands of voices were lifted up in cheers. One evening we went to Paterson, New Jersey, where he addressed a post of the American Legion; and after his speech radicals throughout that city burned his likeness in effigy. His ideas were sane, his addresses always delivered with a great deal of push to them, and his slang was used to great advantage. Many persons criticized him, claiming that he used the same methods as Billy Sunday, but all were unanimous in their belief that Hansen was a great man.

How well I remember his address before an organization which favored Oriental immigration, and of which some prominent bankers were directors. The banquet was of the severe, quiet variety, held at an exclusive club in upper Fifth Avenue. The speakers had been demonstrating the actual benefit derived from Oriental immigration on our west coast, and an air of pleasing, refined, solemnity was upon the countenances of all. Mr. Hansen, the last speaker on the list, had arrived late, having attended two banquets before. He arose, and all eyes were turned upon him as he commenced to speak.

"Gentlemen," he said, glancing at his watch, "I have but a very few minutes to tell you the truth, and I certainly am going to tell it to you.

"We have a right to keep out any one we do not need or want in this country, and so we should keep out all immigrants who are not needed and who are not a benefit to our land. We should select our immigrants in much the same manner as we selected our soldiers. The intending immigrant should go to our representative across the sea, fill out a questionnaire, make a deposit, and be physically, mentally, and normally examined, and his past career investigated. Then these different representatives should send the results with recommendations to our Board of Immigration in Washington, who in turn should select the people they want to allow to enter.

"However, I am totally and absolutely against Oriental immigration except that which includes scholars and business men, and if I had my way I would exclude every member of an Asiatic creed that I found illegally entering the United States."

One afternoon he was addressing a legisla-

tive body in a city adjacent to New York. He had been informed that the public school teachers were underpaid, and their working hours were by far too long in comparison with the salaries they received. But the legislators whom he addressed were not in favor of raising these salaries, and had several times remonstrated against it. Mr. Hansen had been asked to talk on the Seattle strike and the principles of Americanization, and finished his speech in the following manner:

"The average pay of school teachers is under five hundred and fifty dollars a year. They receive less than the average bootblack makes off his tips. They should be paid sufficiently to live in decency and in comfort; but with the pittance they are receiving they cannot be expected to love the people that pay them, for an oppressed individual seldom loves his oppressor. We must care for our children in their homes, and we must teach them the truth in relation to Governmental affairs, and the flag of their nation. Americanism should be a definite course in our schools, then the educator will be paid by the generation which he taught sufficiently to make him contented.

"Resolutions will not, cannot, raise a bushel of wheat. If one man had been accustomed to raise five hundred bushels of wheat, and it takes two men to raise the same amount of wheat now, then the two men in the final analysis will receive the exact compensation that one man received before. It is the generation that will crush socialism; and this is the first principle of Americanization."

Parables of this sort were Mr. Hansen's strong point, for though often his audience did not gather the meaning immediately it always came back to them, and with it was the memory of the snow-white-haired man who had told them of it.

When Mr. Hansen left New York for other parts of the country it was with genuine sorrow that the reporters who had "covered" him bid good-bye. He had been a good influence to the men, and all of them had grown exceedingly fond of him. His farewell speech summed up the entire lesson which he had taught, and not a few of those who heard it regretted that they had not met the "little man with a punch."

"We all have a great duty to perform in life," said Mr. Hansen, "a duty which we can-

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not neglect, no matter how we try, and that is, we must each and every one of us accomplish something which shall not be forgotten. You gentlemen of the press, with your views of all sides of life, know that some day sooner or later you are going to accomplish the ideal for which you set out. Never give up, for nothing is impossible, providing you try your hardest to secure it. But keep with you in your fight for the truth in life the thought, too, that whatever you do, and do righteously, is for the benefit of your country, your country's citizens, your family, and yourselves."

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